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VOLUME V

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The Bibelot

THERE *is for us a certain just pleasure in having first made accessible* The Hollow Land,[1] — *that one of a series of long-lost-to-sight prose romances whereon William Morris bestowed his youthful leisure. Since then his review of* Men and Women, — *an essay quite unknown, or ignored, by Browning specialists,— has appeared in our pages:*[2] *we now reprint entire the exquisite story of* Gertha's Lovers.[3]

---

1 *See* The Bibelot *for July-August, 1897 (Vol. III, pp. 205-281). Bearing in mind "the extraordinary impression" recorded by Mr. Sharp does it not seem probable that Morris founded his title of* The Hollow Land *upon a passage from* Hand and Soul *where Rossetti likens Chiaro to "one just come out of a dusk, hollow country, bewildered with echoes"?*

2 *See* The Bibelot *for March, 1898.*

3 *The editors of* Poet-Lore *have recently taken up our lead in re-issuing Morris's* Oxford and Cambridge *contributions. We claim no right to the exclusive use of these articles; nevertheless we protest against their mutilation of the text of* Gertha's Lovers, *and also regret, (possibly because we may have aided in the error,) that* A Night in a Cathedral *was reprinted at all. It is now known to have been written,* not *by Morris, but by the Rev. William Fulford.*

In the forthcoming authoritative Life of William Morris *by Mr. J. W. Mackail there is room for a finer critical estimate of these first fruits of his earliest years than has yet been attempted. Neither Morris himself, nor his friend and bibliographer, Mr. H. B. Forman, have accorded them due appreciation. Contrariwise there remains for us Sir Edward Burne-Jones' avowal that* Gertha's Lovers — *with its burden of old unhappy things and battles long ago,— written as it was in the golden morning hours of unreturning comradeship — held for him, at least, to the last days of his life a wondrous and never worn out charm. And in this* obiter dictum *of the great artist we are content to rest.*

FOR FEBRUARY:

GERTHA'S LOVERS.
(CONCLUSION.)

FOR MARCH:

LYRICS
from
THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

GERTHA'S LOVERS.
A TALE.
PART I.

Think, listener, that I had the luck to stand,
Awhile ago within a flowery land,
Fair beyond words; that thence I brought away
Some blossoms that before my footsteps lay,
Not plucked by me, not over-fresh or bright!
Yet, since they minded me of that delight,
Within the pages of this book I laid
Their tender petals, there in peace to fade.
Dry are they now, and void of all their scent
And lovely colour, yet what once was meant
By these dull stains, some men may yet descry
As dead upon the quivering leaves they lie.
Behold them here, and mock me if you will,
But yet believe no scorn of men can kill
My love of that fair land wherefrom they came,
Where midst the grass their petals once did flame.

THE EARTHLY PARADISE.

"Not long subsequent to the death of William Morris, Sir Edward [Burne-Jones] spoke to me about the extraordinary impression *Hand and Soul* had made upon Morris and himself, when they first read it, which memorable event occurred one afternoon by Isis' side, William Morris being the reader. "We were both so overcome that we could not speak a word about it." It was on this occasion, too, that the painter told me he had never yet fulfilled an almost life-long intention,—namely, to paint a picture of the Death of Gertha.

No other of William Morris's early writings had so great a fascination for him as the beautiful romantic tale *Gertha's Lovers*, which his friend had written in his company, under the willows by the riverside. I asked him what particular scene or event he had wished to make the subject of his picture, and he replied: "The opening and the closing sentences always invited me in an indescribable way, but the motive *par excellence* was that of Gertha after death, . . . where the beautiful queen lies on the battlefield with the blue speedwell about her pale face, while a soft wind rustles the sunset-lit aspens overhead." . . . "Yes, I must paint Gertha before I die," he added, "and the more so now that dear Morris is gone. It will be like living over my youth, our youth, again."

WILLIAM SHARP,

(*Atlantic Monthly, Sept.*, 1898.)

GERTHA'S LOVERS.

CHAPTER I.

BY THE RIVER.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame."— COLERIDGE.

LONG ago there was a land, never mind where or when, a fair country and good to live in, rich with wealth of golden corn, beautiful with many woods, watered by great rivers, and pleasant trickling streams; moreover, one extremity of it was bounded by the washing of the purple waves, and the other by the solemn watchfulness of the purple mountains.

In a fair lowland valley of this good land sat a maiden, one summer morning early, working with her needle, while she thought of other matters as women use. She was the daughter of a mere peasant, tiller of the kind soil, fisher in the silver waters of the river that flowed down past his cottage to the far-off city; he lived from day to day seeing few people, the one or two neighbours who lived in the cottages hard by, the priest

of the little hamlet, now and then an artizan travelling in search of work; except, indeed, when he went to the wars; for he was a fighting man, as were all the people of that country, when need was. His wife was dead these five years, and his daughter alone lived with him; yet she, though of such lowly parentage, was very beautiful; nor merely so, but grand and queen-like also; such a woman as might inspire a whole people to any deed of wise daring for her love.

What thoughts were hers, as she sat working on that summer morning, the song of birds all about her, and the lapping of the low, green river waves on the white sand sounding fresh and pleasantly as the west wind blew them toward her? What thoughts? Good thoughts, surely. For the land wherein she dwelt — so fair a land, so small a land, had never ceased to be desired by the tyrant kings who bore rule round about. Always had they made war against it; never had they conquered, though sometimes they were seemingly victorious in a scattered fight here and there, through sheer force of numbers; for the dwellers in that good land were of a different race to the

lazy, slavish people who dwelt about them. Many a song Gertha could sing you of how, long, and long ago, they came from a land far over the sea, where the snow-laden pine-forests, weird halls of strange things, hang over the frozen waters for leagues, and leagues, and leagues along the coasts that were the cradles of mighty nations. Sailing over the sea then, long ago, with their ships all a-blaze with the steel that the heroes carried, they came to this land with their wives and children, and here made desperate war with the wild beasts, with savage swamps, dragon-inhabited, daring famine, and death in all ugly shapes.

And they grew and grew, for God favoured them; and those who dwelt nearest to the "Savage Land," as it used to be called, grew more and more like the strangers, and their good rule spread; and they had a mighty faith withal that they should one day ring the world, going westward ever till they reached their old home in the east, left now so far behind.

Judge, therefore, whether the tyrant kings feared these free, brave men! Judge whether, growing more and more cruel as they grew

more and more fearful, they strained the chain over the miserable millions of their subjects so that with many it grew intolerable, and was broken asunder; so that, both in well-doing and in wrong-doing, God's kingdom spread.

Think what armies went up against the good land; what plains and valleys were sown with swords and spears and helmets, and the bones of valiant men; and from being nameless once, only thought of as the place where such and such a tree grew very plenteous, where such a river ran, became now to be remembered to all time, nor to be forgotten in eternity.

Think of the desperate fights, in treacherous slippery fords, where the round stones rolled and shifted beneath the hurried trampling of men, fighting for life, and more than life, amid the plash of the reddened waters in the raw, gusty twilight of the February mornings; or in close woods, little lighted up by the low sun just going to sink when the clouds looked thunderous in the summer evenings; or with shouts from crag to crag of the great slate-cliffs, with wrathful thundering of rocks down into the thronged

pass below, with unavailing arrow-flights, because arrows cannot pierce the mountains, or leap about among the clefts of the rocks where the mountaineers stand, fiercely joyous.

Think too of the many heads, old and young, beautiful and mean, wept over, not joyously indeed; nay, who knows with what agony, yet at least with love unflecked by any wandering mote of the memory of shame or shrinking; think of the many who, though they fought not at all with spear or sword, yet did, indeed, bear the brunt of many a battle, in patiently waiting through heart-sickening watchings, yet never losing hope, in patiently bearing unutterable misery of separation, yet never losing faith.

Had not Gertha then enough to think of, as she sat working hard by where the water lapped the white sand? For this people were so drawn together, that through the love they bore to one another sprung terrible deeds of heroism, any one of which would be enough for a life-time's thought; almost every man of that nation was a hero and a fit companion for the angels; and the glory of their fathers, and how themselves might

do deeds that would not shame them, were the things that the men thought of always; and the women, for their part, looked to become wives to brave men, mothers to brave sons.

So now Gertha was singing rough spirit-stirring songs of the deeds of old, and thinking of them too with all her heart as she sung. Why she, weak woman as she was, had not she seen the enemies' ships hauled up on the island bank yonder, and burned there? Were not the charred logs, which once, painted red and black, used to carry terror to the peaceful, slothful people of the islands, mouldering there yet, grown over by the long clinging briony? Did not her eyes flash, her brow and cheeks flush with triumph, her heart swell and heave beneath her breast, when the war-music grew nearer and louder every moment; and when she saw at last the little band of her dear countrymen hemming in the dejected prisoners, the white red-crossed banner floating over all, blessing all alike, knight, and sailor, and husbandman; and when she saw, too, her own dear, dear father, brave among the bravest, marching there with bright eyes,

and lips curled with joyous triumphant indignation, though the blood that he was marked withal did not come from his enemies' veins only? Did she not then sing, joyously and loud-ringing, remembering these things and many others, while the west wind was joyous about her too, whispering to her softly many things concerning the land of promise?

She sung about a king who lived long ago, a man wise and brave beyond all others, slain treacherously in a hunting party by emissaries of the enemy, and slain at the height of his wisdom and good rule; and this was one of the songs that his people had embalmed his memory withal. So, as she sung, behold, the blowing of horns, and trampling as of horse, just as her voice rang clear with,

"The King rode out in the morning early,
Went riding to hunting over the grass;
Ere the dew fell again that was then bright and pearly,
O me! — what a sorrow had come to pass!"

And a great company rode past going to hunt indeed, riding slowly, between her and the river, so that she saw them all clearly enough, the two noble knights especially,

who rode at the head of them; one very grand and noble, young withal, yet looking as if he were made to burst asunder the thickest circles of the battle, to gather together from the most hopeless routs men enough to face the foe, and go back fighting, to roll back the line of fight when it wavered, to give strength to all warriors' hearts: fancy such an one, so wise, yet so beautiful, that he moved like the moving of music; such tenderness looked from his eyes, so lovingly the morning sun and the sweet morning haze touched the waves of his golden hair, as they rode on happily. He that rode beside him was smaller and slenderer, smaller both in body and face, and it seemed in mind and heart also; there was a troubled restless look about his eyes; his thin lips were drawn inward tightly, as if he were striving to keep down words which he ought not to speak, or else sometimes very strangely, this look would change, the eyes would glance about no more, yet look more eager and strangely anxious than ever; the thin lips would part somewhat, as if he were striving to say something which would not leave his heart; but the great man's eyes were large

and serene, his lips full, his forehead clear, broad, and white; his companion was sallow, his forehead lower and rather narrow, his whole face drawn into wrinkles that came not by age, for he was no older than the other.

They past as they had come, and when the last note of their horns had died away, Gertha went about her household duties; yet all that day, whatever she might do, however much she tried to beat the phantom down, that stately man with the golden hair floated always before her eyes.

* * * * *

Evening now, the sun was down, the hunt had swept away past the cottage again, though not within sight of it, and the two knights having lost their companions were riding on slowly, their tired horses hanging down their heads.

"Sire, where are we going to?" said the small dark man; "I mean to say where past that beech-tree? the low swinging boughs of which will hit you about the end of the nose, I should think: Ah! his head goes down, somewhat in good time; he has escaped the beech-bough."

But the other answered no word, for he did not hear his friend speak, he was singing softly to himself:

"The King rode out in the morning early,
Went riding to hunting over the grass;
Ere the dew fell again which was then round and pearly,
O me!—what a sorrow had come to pass."

He sung this twice or thrice with his head sunk down toward the saddle-bow, while the other knight gazed at him with a sad half smile, half sneer on his lips and eyes; then with a sigh he turned him about and said, "Pardon, Leuchnar, you said something I did not hear; my mind was not in this wood, but somewhere else, I know not where. Leuchnar, we shall not find the hunt to-night; let us, let us seek rest at that cottage that we passed this morning; it seems to be the only house near."

"Yea, my Lord Olaf," said Leuchnar, smiling again in that bitter way, when he saw in spite of the twilight, both of the sunken sun and of the thick beech-wood, a great blush come over Olaf's face.

"Yea, for why should we not?" and as he said this, he fairly burst out into strange explosive laughter, that did not sound merry,

yet was not repulsive, but sad only; for Leuchnar was thinking of the ways of man, and found much to amuse him therein; yet his laughter sounded sad in spite of himself, for he was not one who was made to laugh, somehow; but what specially made him laugh now was this, that neither of them had forgotten that hour in the morning, and the maiden sitting alone near the river: each of them, as they burst through the greenest glades of the forest, with cry of hound and sound of horn, had, according to his faith, visions of a dark-haired maiden, sitting and singing, her eyes raised and fixed on one of them; also both wished to go there again, and accordingly had been sad laggards in the hunt, and had lost themselves, not very unwillingly, perhaps; yet now neither liked to confess his longing to the other; Leuchnar would not even do so to himself, and for these reasons he laughed, and his laugh sounded strange and sad.

But Olaf knew that he was in love, and all day long he had been nursing that love delightedly; he blushed yet more at Leuchnar's laugh, for these two seldom needed to tell each other their thoughts in so many

words, and certainly not this time. He bowed his head downwards in his confusion so low, that his gold curls, falling forward, mingled with the full black of his horse's mane, and growled out therefrom:

"You are a strange fellow, Leuchnar, though a good one; but we will go."

"Yea, to the peasant's cottage, my lord," said Leuchnar, with his head raised, his eyes set straight forward, and his lips curled into something much more like a sneer than a smile; thereat Olaf with a spring sat upright in his saddle, and glanced quickly on either side of him, as though something had stung him unawares; afterwards they both turned their horses' heads aside, and rode slowly in the direction of the cottage, Leuchnar singing in a harsh voice,

"The King rode out in the morning early,"—

"though the dew has fallen again," he muttered; whereat Olaf gave an uneasy side glance at him.

And soon they heard again the lapping of the river waves on the sand of the silver bay, only lower than before, because the wind had fallen. Then presently they drew rein

before the cottage door, when the moon was already growing golden. Sigurd, Gertha's father, came to the door, and courteously held the stirrups of the knights while they dismounted, and they entered, and sat down to such fare as the peasant had, and Gertha served them. But they prayed her so to sit down, that at last it seemed discourteous to refuse them, and she sat down timidly.

Then said Sigurd, when they had eaten enough, "I pray you tell me, fair knights, what news there is from the city, if you come from thence; for there is a rumour of war hereabout, only uncertain as yet."

"Nay, at the city," Leuchnar said, "there is certain news concerning one war, and even beside this, rumours of a great conspiracy between the surrounding rulers of slaves. The Emperor says that this valley always belonged to him; though, indeed, he was not very anxious for it when poisonous swamps spread out on both sides of the river here; or rather his ancestors laid no claim to it; but now, at all events, he is coming to take his own, if he can get it; coming by way (it is his only way, poor fellow!) of the mountain passes. Only, my lord Adolf is off to

meet him with ten thousand men, and they are going to try the matter by arbitrement in this fashion; marry, that if the valley belongs to the Emperor, he must know the way to it, and accordingly shall have it if he gets through the mountains in any other way than as a prisoner or dead corpse."

Sigurd and Olaf laughed grimly at Leuchnar's conceit, and Gertha's eyes flashed; while both the knights watched her without seeing how matters went with each other. "Then," said Sigurd again, "Concerning the young king, fair knights, what is he?" Olaf's eyes twinkled at the question, and Leuchnar seeing that he wanted to answer, let him do so, watching him the while with a quaint amused look on his face. "Why," said Olaf, "he is counted brave and wise, and being young, will, I hope, live long; but he is very ugly." Here he turned, and looked at his friend with a smile. Sigurd started and seemed disappointed, but Gertha turned very pale, and rose from her seat suddenly, nor would she sit down again all that evening.

Then Olaf saw that she knew he was the king, and somehow did not feel inclined to laugh any more, but grew stately and solemn,

and rather silent too; but Leuchnar talked much with Gertha, and he seemed to her to be very wise; yet she remembered not what he said, scarcely heard it indeed, for was not the KING by her; the king of all that dear people; yet, above all, whether the other were so or not, *her* king?

Poor maid! she felt it was so hopeless; nay, she said to herself, "Even if he were to say he loved me, I should be obliged to deny my love; for what would all the people say, that the king of so great a nation should marry a peasant girl, without learning or wealth, or wisdom, with nothing but a pretty face? Ah! we must be apart always in this world."

And Olaf, the king, said, "So Leuchnar loves her — and I love her. Well, it will change his life, I think; let him have her; poor fellow! he has not got many to love him. Besides, she is a peasant's daughter; I am a great king. Yet is she nobler than I am, for all my kingship. Alas, I fear the people, not for myself, but for her; they will not understand her nobility; they will only see that which comes uppermost, her seeming wisdom, her seeming goodness, which,

perchance, will not show to be so much greater than other women's, as the queen's ought to do. Then withal to her, if, perchance, at any time I am not quite sufficient to fill her heart, will come a weariness of our palace life, a longing for old places, old habits; then sorrow, then death, through years and years of tired pining, fought against, bravely indeed, but always a terrible weight to such an one as she is. Yet, if I knew she loved me, all this ought to be put aside; and yet, why should she love me? And, if she does not love me now, what hope is there; for how can we see each other any more, living such different far apart lives? But for Leuchnar this is otherwise; he may come and go often. Then he is wiser; ah! how much wiser than I am; can think and talk quite wonderfully, while I am but a mere fighting man; how it would change his life too, when he found any one to love him infinitely, to think his thoughts, be one with him, as people say. Yes, let Leuchnar have her."

Those three so seeming-calm! what stormy passions, wild longings, passed through their hearts that evening! Leuchnar seeming-

genial with his good friendly talk, his stories of brave deeds, told as if his heart were quite in them; speaking so much more like other men than his wont was; yet saying to himself, "She must see that I love her; when since I can remember have I talked so?" Poor fellow; how should she know that? his voice was to her as the voices of a dream, or perhaps rather like grand music when it wakes a man; for, verily the glory of his tales got quite separated from him, and in some dim way floated in a glory round about Olaf, as far as Gertha was concerned. She heard his name, the hero of every deed, which that far-distant knight, Leuchnar, less present than his own tales, was telling of; whenever danger clung about the brave in those tales, her heart beat for fear of her golden-haired, broad-foreheaded hero; she wondered often, as her heart wandered even from those tales, why she did not fall down before him and win his love or die. How then could she think of Leuchnar? Yet Olaf did think of him, saw well through all his talking what he was thinking of; and, for his own part, though he did not talk aloud, and though even what he said to

himself had to do with that subject dearest to him, yet none the less even to himself choked down fiery longings, hardly, very hardly to be restrained.

He tried hard to throw himself into Leuchnar's heart, to think of the loneliness of the man, and his wonderful power of concentrating every thought, every least spark of passion, on some one thing; he remembered how in the years past he had clutched so eagerly at knowledge; how that knowledge had overmastered him, made him more and more lonely year by year; made him despise others because they did not KNOW; he remembered, with a certain pang, how Leuchnar even despised him for one time; yes, he could bear just then to recal all the bitter memories of that time; how he saw it creeping over his friend; how he saw it struggled against, yet still gaining, gaining so surely; he called to mind that day, when Leuchnar spoke his scorn out openly, bitterly despising his own pride and himself the while; he remembered how Leuchnar came back to him afterwards, when knowledge failed him; and yet how it was never the same between them as it had been; he

remembered then many a fight wherein they rode side by side together, Leuchnar as brave as he, yet ever with that weight of self-scorn upon him, that made him despise even his bravery; while Olaf rejoiced in his own, reverenced that of others; then he remembered how he was made king, how the love of his countrymen became from that time much more of a passion, true love, than it had been; and through all these things he tried to be Leuchnar, as it were; not such a hard thing for him; for, through his unselfishness, he had gained that mighty power of sympathy for others, which no fiercest passion can altogether put aside, even for the time. So he, too, had his thoughts, not easily to be read by others, not to be expressed by himself.

So the night passed; and they went to rest, or what seemed so, till they were wakened very early in the morning by the sound of a trumpet ringing all about the wooded river-shore; the knights and Sigurd rose and went forth from the cottage, knowing the trumpet to be a friendly one; and presently there met them a band of knights fully armed, who drew rein when they saw them.

"King Olaf," said their leader, an old, white-haired knight, "thank God we have found you! When we reached the palace last night, after having lost you, there were waiting for us ambassadors, bringing with them declarations of war from the three Dukes and King Borrace; so now, I pray you, quick back again! I have sent all about for men, but the time presses, and there is a credible report that King Borrace has already begun his march toward the plain; as for the three Dukes, (whom may the Lord confound!) Lord Hugh's army will account for them, at any rate to hold them in check till we have beaten King Borrace; but for him we must march presently, if we mean to catch him; only come King Olaf, and all will be well."

Then knelt Sigurd before the King, as he stood with eyes flashing, and cheek flushing, thinking how God's foes were hastening on to their destruction; yet for all his joy he longed to see Gertha, perhaps for the last time; for she was not there, neither did she come at Sigurd's call.

So the King smiled sorrowfully when Sigurd made excuse for her, saying that she feared

so great a man as the King; he could not help wishing she loved him, even though he meant to give her up: so he said; he could not acknowledge to the full what a difference her love would make to him.

Then would he have given Sigurd presents of money and jewels, but Sigurd would not take them; only at the last, being constrained, he took the King's dagger, hilted with curiously wrought steel.

Then they all rode away together; Barulf, the old man, by the King's side, and talking eagerly with him concerning the coming wars; but Leuchnar fell into the rear, and said no word to any.

Chapter II.

LEUCHNAR'S RIDE.

THEN for some days each man wrought his best, that they might meet the invaders as they ought; yet through all the work Leuchnar seemed very restless and uneasy, falling into staring fits, and starting from them suddenly; but the king was calm and cheerful outwardly, whatever passion strove to fever him.

But one day when he was resting, leaning out of a window of the palace that was almost hidden by the heaped jasmine and clematis, he heard horse-hoofs, and presently saw Leuchnar, his sallow face drawn into one frown of eagerness, well mounted, lightly armed, just going to ride away, Olaf well knew whither.

A fierce pang shot through to Olaf's heart; he felt dizzied and confused; through the clematis stems and curled tendrils, through the mist rising from his own heart, he dimly saw Leuchnar gather himself together, raise his bridle-hand, and bend forward as his horse sprung up to the gallop; he felt sick, his strong hands trembled; and through the

whirling of his brain, and the buzzing in his ears, he heard himself shout out: "Good speed, Sir Leuchnar, with your wooing!"

This was enough; his heart sank, and his passion grew cool for the second, when he saw how fearfully Leuchnar's face changed at the well-understood words: troubled before as it had been, what was it now, when suddenly all the conscience of the man showed in that small spot of clay, his face?

He turned his horse, and rode back swiftly; Olaf waited for him there, scarce knowing what he did at first; yet within a little, something, thoughts of approaching death perhaps, had steadied his brain, and kept his passion back: he heard soon the quick footsteps of some one striding far, and walked quietly toward the door, where he met Leuchnar, his teeth set, his lips a little open, that his hard-drawn breathings might not choke him, his black eyes fixed forward and shining grimly from under his heavy brows like pent-house roofs.

Olaf took him by the arm and gripped him hard; but he tore it away fiercely; he flung himself down before Olaf's feet.

"King Olaf," he said passionately, "I will not go, I will stay here then, if you look at me like that — with your broad white forehead and golden locks — you! — I will die here if I cannot live till I meet the enemy."

Olaf stooped to raise him up, but he drew farther back from him; then said, still kneeling:

"No word — no word yet, king, from you — was it not enough, Olaf, that you should take care of me, and love me in the days before you were king — me, a lonely discontented man, a black spot in the clear whiteness of the most loving people of the earth? was it not enough that, on the day when all the people shouted for Olaf, calling him the wisest and the best, you, with the crown yet on your head, the holy oil not dry there, should take me by the hand, and say to all the knights and all the people, whom you loved so, whom I (God help me!) loved not; 'behold Leuchnar, my friend, who has given me all the wisdom I ever had?' Ah, king! had you looked on me at that moment and seen even then my curling lips saying to my false heart, 'I am so much wiser than these simple ones!' — but your clear eyes

only looked straight forward, glancing over the heads of the people that was dear to you, despised by me. Was it not enough, King Olaf, that you, as the days passed, still keeping me the nearest to you, still asking me concerning everything, should be beginning to thaw my hard heart and to shake my faith in the faithlessness of Adam's sons? were not these things enough, that you also, first of all finding pretences to mar the nobleness of your sacrifice even to your own heart, should give your love up to me, not as I do now to you, noisily, but quietly, without a word spoken; then afterwards, when you saw with what base eagerness I caught at that love given up by you, and fearing terrible things for my wretched soul if this went on, stopped me, like my guardian angel, just now when I was sneaking off like a thief in the night, and perhaps now — God help me! God help me! — have perhaps even made me do one thing in the whole course of my life which it is good to have done in His eyes?"

Then, as he knelt there, like a man before the presence of God, the king spoke slowly, with humble face indeed, and tearfully, but

almost smiling, because all things seemed so clear to him in a moment of prophetic vision.

"Dear Knight, your words seem like a bitter satire to me; for I did not call you back just now for your salvation, but because my selfish passion (think of a selfish king, Leuchnar; what a misery!) my passion carried me away: O, forgive me! for indeed I wish you to have her; think now, how many cares, and joys too, I have in tending this people that God has given me; I am sure that I shall not be quite unhappy for long, whatever happens; sometimes, perhaps, when I am weary, sometimes in the dead night, sometimes in the dying autumn, I shall have thoughts of her; but they will never be unbearable, because no power in earth or heaven can keep me from loving her: it will be no shame to you either, Leuchnar; do you not remember, in past days, how, when we talked of this matter, you have often said, (wherein even then I scarce agreed with you,) that the love of man and woman should go before everything, before all friendship, all duty, all honour even? you thought so then; can

you doubt now?" He ceased, and said no word for a little; then spoke doubtfully.

"And yet, and yet — are we not as men who reckon, as they say, without their host? What will Gertha say? ought we not to know before this great battle is fought, from which, perchance, neither of us will come alive? and we march to-morrow, and I may not leave the council and my work here: wherefore, dear Leuchnar, I pray you on your allegiance mount again and ride quickly away to that cottage, and ask her if she — loves you — and if — if — Leuchnar, we may be near to death; whatever happens we must be brothers — so God speed you on your wooing."

Leuchnar had risen while the king was speaking, and stood before him till he ceased with head sunk down on his breast; then raised his face, radiant now with a certain joy, to Olaf's; he spoke no word, as though that joy, or something else, confused and hurrying, that went with it, was too great for him; but, bending, kissed the king's hand and departed.

Then Olaf again leaned from the window and watched him go by again swiftly, till the

sound of the horse-hoofs had died away: then he turned toward the council chamber, thinking:

"His face was not like the face of a man who is going to do what he thinks wrong: I fear lest he go as my ambassador — nay, do I *fear?* Yet surely that will be the best way to speed his own wooing — O, Gertha! Gertha! — perhaps the sword will cut this knot so close wound up together now; yet I will not pray for that, only that Leuchnar may live."

Then presently he was in the midst of his lords. Oh what a weary ride that was of Leuchnar's! It was early morning when he started, high noon by the time he drew rein at the cottage door; and that joy which at first he had in his noble deed faded off his face as the sun rose higher, even as the dew did from off the face of the meadows, and when he dismounted at that house of Sigurd's, his face was woful and ghastly to look on.

He knocked at the door, then entered when no one answered: he said out aloud, though he saw no one there, as if he distrusted his power to repeat that lesson got

by heart with such pain: "I bear a message to the Lady Gertha."

Only the cool duskiness of the heavy-shadowed oak beams met his eye, only the echo of his own hollow voice, and the chirp of the sparrows, the scream of the swifts,—met his ear.

For Gertha was not within; but from the wood she had seen the glimmer of his arms in the hot noontide, and came down, stately and slow, unmoved to look on, but her heart of hearts wavering within her with hope and fear and ecstasy of love: perhaps (O poor heart, what wild hope!) it might be the king.

She met him just at the door from whence he had turned to seek her: he durst not meet her eyes, those grand fire-orbs that had pierced him through and through that other day; if he had looked up at her face he would have seen the disappointment, the sickness of hope deferred, showing somewhat there in spite of her efforts to keep the appearance of it back.

He, with his face turned away, said, in a hard voice as before, "I bear a message for the Lady Gertha." No blush coloured her

pale cheeks, no start or trembling went through her grand form; she still held that flower in her hand, holding it with queenly sway, for it fitted in her hand like a sceptre: she said gently, "If you want *Lady* Gertha, you must go elsewhere, my lord; I am Sigurd the husbandman's daughter."

"But you are Gertha that we heard sing that day," he said fiercely, and turning his eager eyes suddenly on her.

"Yea," she said, trembling a little now, and turning even paler; for she saw how matters went with him, and feared, not any violence from him, for she soon read him through and through, but rather that he should fall down dead before her, his passion rent his heart so.

"Gertha, Olaf the king says, Will you be queen?" he said, still looking hungrily at her.

The crimson blood rushed up over her face, then went to her heart again, leaving her very lips grey. She paused a moment, with her arms stretched straight down, and her hands clenched: she said, without looking up:

"Tell him, 'No;' I am too lowly, not wise

enough, I should shame him; I will not be queen —— But "——

What wild passions rushed through poor Leuchnar's heart! how he fought with that Devil which had looked him steadily in the face so long, ever since he was born till now.

She stood there still before him, with arms stretched downward, hands clenched; he seized her by the wrist, and almost shrieked out; "But what?—Gertha! Gertha! before God, do you *love* him?"

Her colour came again as she looked him in the face, put very close to her's now, so close that she felt his breath upon it; she said calmly, almost proudly, "Yea, I love him; how could it be otherwise?"

"Some token then, for Christ's sake; quick, Gertha! and where will you be in the war time?"

"My father goes with me to-morrow to the city. I shall dwell at St. Agnes' convent of nuns till Borrace is defeated."

"Then some token!—here!" (and he tore down from the cottage eaves a bunch of golden stone-crop) "if you love him (think of God, Gertha,) kiss this."

She bowed her head, and touched the

yellow flowers with her lips; as she did so, he bent and kissed her forehead; then, with the flowers yet in his hand, he sprung impetuously to his saddle and galloped as if for his life. The Devil was conquered at last.

"Poor knight!" said Gertha, looking after him pityingly, "then he loves me too; it seems wrong to feel happy when such a noble knight is so miserable."

Yet she did feel very happy, and soon forgot poor Leuchnar and his sorrows, who was riding meanwhile wildly through the forest; yet, as he drew further from her, the madness of his passion abated a little; he gave his horse rest at last, and, dismounting, lay down on the ferns by the side of the forest-path, and there, utterly worn out in mind and body, fell asleep; a dreamless sleep it was at first, as deep as death almost, yet, as it grew lighter, he fell to dreaming, and at last woke from a dream wherein Gertha had come to him, shrieked out that Olaf was slain, then thrown her arms about his neck; but, as he tried to kiss her, he awoke, and found himself under the beech-boughs, his horse standing over him, and

the bridle, hanging loose from the bit, dangling about his face; for the horse doubted if he were dead.

He rose from that dream with a great wrench of his heart, and, mounting, rode on soberly. The moon shone down on him now, for he had slept far into the night. The stone-crop was fading fast, and as he looked at it, he doubted whether to curse it or bless it, but at last raised it to his mouth and kissed it, knowing whose lips had touched it before, looking half-fearfully over his shoulder as he did so; perhaps he thought a little also how Olaf's face would flush into perfect beauty for joy, when he saw it; for joy mixed with a certain regret for himself.

So, when he reached the palace, quite late at night, when the moon was already setting, he found Olaf standing in the great hall alone, looking pale and wearied.

Leuchnar came quite close to him, and said, taking his hand and smiling a sick smile, "Olaf, she sent you this, kissing it."

Olaf caught the faded flowers, kissed them a thousand times, knelt, and held them against his heart, against his forehead. He

murmured — what words I know not, or, knowing, shall not say; while Leuchnar stood by with that old bitter smile on his lips. Poor fellow! he had expected sudden clasping of Olaf's arms about him, praise for his nobleness, consolation for his failure. Ah! did he not know himself what a passion love was? Then why did he expect from so true a man as Olaf protestation that he was the first when truly he was but the second? O! you all know what it is to be second in such a race; it is to be nowhere. Why he, too, if he had been successful, would have forgotten Olaf, and the way his sword flashed in the battle. It was only now in his disappointment that a certain natural instinct made him catch at all the love that came across him of whatsoever kind. That was why he thought so much of Olaf now. Yes, and in a little time he did think of all this, and smiled no more. "Poor Leuchnar!" he said to himself, "you must be very far in the background now, know that for certain. Then, did you not know all this when you knelt here some twelve hours back? O! foolish Leuchnar! yet, poor Leuchnar, too!"

And he was now so far from smiling that, but for his manhood, he would have wept for self-pity. Moreover, Olaf came to him and said, laying his hands on his shoulders, and leaning forward towards his face:

"You are the noblest of all men, and will in nowise lose your reward."

And Leuchnar knew that, or he might have gone mad; yet he prayed that his reward might be death presently, in the joyous battle.

So, on the morrow, they marched to meet King Borrace; and, on the evening of the third day, encamped but a little distance from his pirates.

And when, on the next morning, they stood in battle array, and the king rode up and down their line, Leuchnar saw in his helm the bunch of stone-crop, now quite withered.

Then that day, among the aspens, they joined battle.

Chapter III.

THE LIGHT OF ISRAEL.

THEN, in the midst of them, the old man rose up and spoke, while all the rest sat silent, some gazing fixedly on the ground, some on the fair dead king, that lay there before them.

For he had been slain with one wound that had gone right through his breast to the heart, and his body was not hacked or disfigured. They had taken his rent armour from off him, and washed his corpse, and spread out his long yellow hair to right and left of his face, along the samite cloth, purple, gold-starred, that he lay upon; and, behind him, at his head, they had laid his sword and armour, the helm yet having that stone-crop in it, the ends of the stalks at least; for all the rest had been shredded off in that fierce fight. Great waxen candles burned all about him; two priests sat at the head and two at the foot of the bier, clad in gorgeous robes of deep sorrowful purple, gold-embroidered; for these men reverenced man's body so, even when the soul was not so near to it as it had been, that, in those

hours of doubt and danger, they thought the time well spent in making the body of their king, of him the best and most beautiful of all men, look as beautiful as God would ever have dead bodies look.

So, while some gazed on the ground, some on the fair dead king, none weeping, but all stern with thought; for they had to think of him as being present with them in their council, not *dead*— while they gazed earnestly, the old man, Barulf, arose and said,

"Sons of the men that go from east to west, and round again to the east! I advise you this day to do such a deed of valour as you have never done yet. Death in God's behalf, on the side of your friends, is not hard to bear, brothers, even when it comes slow and lingering; but how glorious to die in a great battle, borne down by over-many foes, to lie, never dead, but a living terror for all time to God's enemies and ours, a living hope to the sons of God. And to die altogether, beholding, between the sword-strokes, the faces of dear friends all a-light with intensest longing—is not that glorious!"

Their stern faces lighted up with flushing of cheek and flashing of eye as he spake; for in their hearts was fear of something far worse than dying on that field between the aspens with friends' eyes upon them. But Barulf went on.

"Yet, brothers, not this I bid you do. I give, as my counsel, that we depart this night, taking with us nothing but our arms, some small provision, and this dear dead thing here: turn our backs upon the foe, and depart, that we may reach the mother-city, where the women and children are; and I think I have good reasons for this."

"And how then shall we face the women and children?" said a young man moodily.

"Brother," said Barulf, "will you be a coward, indeed, from fear of being thought a coward? your heart does not counsel this, I know; and as for the women and children, are they mere beasts, so as not to understand this? will they not say rather? 'These men are warriors, they cannot fear death; then are they the braver to be so faithful, to be without fear of reproach for fear, so faithful to us above all things; we will love them all the more.'"

"But why should we not die here, fighting, Sir Barulf?" said another; "are there not men left when we are all dead?"

"Yea, dear knight, men, but not men *enough*. Think awhile — Adolf with his ten thousand men, and God's snow and storm that are tens and tens of thousands, guard the passes against the emperor. Good — they are enough as it is; but take away half for the defence of the cities, the mother-city above all, which is the weakest, the most beautiful, the fullest of women and children of all — and then would five thousand be enough to guard those passes? Even as it is, were not this summer a cold one and the snows deep, the emperor might drive his serf-soldiers, with whip and sword-point over our dead soldiers' bodies: but suppose they were lessened, our heroes would indeed die in their places, and would doubtless slay many of the enemy; but suppose they killed and wounded twice their own number, yet two days afterwards some 200,000 men would be marching over our land within fifty miles of the beautiful city.

"Again, Edwin and his 300 ships, diligently sailing into every nook and strait of

the pirate island, and every day and night solemnly passing to and fro, with the white red-crossed banner at their mast-heads, guard the coast well; but let him land half, nay a third only of his men for the defence of the city, and in a week the sea-port towns and villages, safe from all scath now, would be blazing very high toward the heavens, and King Borrace's red and black ship-sides would gleam with the reflection of the Greek fire, as the dragons of it leapt toward the harbour-mouth.

"Moreover, the Lord Hugh, in his fortified camp, holds his own well enough now against the three Dukes; who prowl always like accursed cowardly wolves as they are, gnashing their teeth when they think that their provisions cannot last much longer, not more than another month; and, stamping on the ground, invoke the devil, their cousin german, when they remember that not a blade of grass or ear of corn is left in the country behind them, laid waste as it was with fire, by the cruel fools as they marched: they, howling too for very rage when they see the wains in long lines entering Hugh's camp, and when they hear the merry sound

of the trumpets, mingled often with the chaunting of the priests and the singing of men, singing about death that is no death. Ah! they howl, the wolves disappointed enough now; but suppose Hugh were to weaken his camp so as no longer to be able to send out his swarm of light-armed, who prevent the enemy from spoiling the yet unwasted country; then, also, no longer fearing an attack, the Dukes march nearer to him, get themselves corn and wine, cut off his supplies, march past him at last with their 50,000 men, not easy to destroy *then*. For cowards as the Dukes are, and imbecile drivellers, knowing nothing of war, yet have they along with them crafty captains, who, when their highnesses' passions master them not, give good advice which is listened to, and the commoner sort, though robbers by nature and nurture, have yet a certain kind of courage, and much strength in body and skill of arms."

In all the warrior's faces you might have seen a gloomy conviction that his counsel was good; but they sat silent, it seemed such a shame to turn and flee before this enemy they had just beaten.

Yet never for a moment did they doubt but that their people would in the end prevail over the enemies that hemmed them in, whatever became of those 20,000 left alive there on the plain; and Barulf spoke to the better part of all their hearts, when he said:

"Does it then seem so hard a thing to you, sons of the men that go westward, that we, having fought for three days such a battle as this, should have at last to turn and flee, carrying our dead king with us? Oh! it is hard, very bitter and cruel, brothers; yet is it God's will, and in his sight, doubtless, is as glorious as if we all died here in our places. And I am well assured that this and all things else only hasten us westward; it cannot be in any of your hearts that this people should fail. Nay, rather our sons' sons in the after-time will speak of these as glorious days in which the nations hedged us about, but in which we prevailed mightily against them.—

"But for another matter"—and as he spoke, the memory came across him bitterly that the king they had chosen but two years since lay dead before them now: then his

face changed, and so it was with all of them, now that they were free to think of that loss; for, but a little time back, he had been with them; even just now, as they talked in their old way of fresh battles, and thought of the swinging of the swords, he had almost seemed to be there alive; but now—

One of the priests who sat by him had fallen asleep, wearied out with tending the wounded and dying, and his head had fallen on his breast; another sat quite upright with his hands laid on his knees, thinking dreadful things of what was coming on the land; the third, a spare young man, black-haired and sallow-faced, in his nervous anxiety twitched at the border of his cope as he glanced about the tent, looking uneasily on the face, first of one, then of another, of those that sat there; the fourth, as he sat, sad-faced and great-eyed, thinking of his mother and sisters whom he had left in a castle of the lowland country, had taken one long yellow tress of the dead man's hair, and was absently twining it about his fingers.

Then arose Leuchnar with about as

miserable a look on his face as a good man can ever have, and said:

"Sir Barulf, I know what you were about to say, concerning the king" (a shudder ran through them all), "I have a message from the king to all of you. I was by him when the spear pierced his true heart; I drew him a little out of the fight; he said: 'I am wounded to death; but, alive or dead, I must not leave this field, bury me just about where the enemy makes his last stand before he turns.' For you see, knights, our dead lord was sure of this, that the fair city would be saved. Then the blood rising from his heart choked him somewhat, yet he said gaspingly: 'Quick, Leuchnar, bend to my mouth.' So I bent, and he said, faintly and hurriedly: 'Undo my mail, and take the paper there, and give it to the lords and knights in council.' So I took a paper from his breast over his heart; the spear had pierced it through, and had carried some of it into the wound, and the trickling blood had stained it; I took it from off the broken truncheon of the lance which was yet in the wound. I showed it to him, he bowed his head in token that all was well,

when he had looked at it eagerly; then he said: 'I wish to go, draw out the truncheon, faithful and true! poor Leuchnar!' I drew it out; there was a great rush of blood; he smiled on me, and died."

Thereon Leuchnar stepped from his place, and, going up to Barulf, gave him the paper, very much stained and torn. Barulf read it.

"Good saints, how strange! do you know what is written in it, Sir Leuchnar?"

"Nay, I but guess, Sir Barulf; for I did not open it."

"Listen, knights!" said Barulf, and he read: "Knights and lords, if I die in this battle, as I think I shall, then (if so be it seem good to you) let Gertha, the daughter of Sigurd the husbandman, be queen in my stead; she lodges in the mother-city, with the abbess of St. Agnes' Abbey of nuns."

"Yes, I thought so," said Leuchnar, scarcely however speaking to them, for he was thinking to himself of himself; his sorrow seemed to have lessened much, even in the reading of that letter, for he thought: "Now she is queen, and has this sorrow on her, I can serve her much better, and my love will not trouble her now as it would

have done, for it will seem only like the love of a good subject to his mistress; and I will lessen every grief of hers as it arises, loving her so, never vexing her in the least; O selfish Leuchnar, to be glad of her sorrow! yet I am glad, not of her sorrow, but of my service that will be."

These thoughts, and how many more, he thought in a single instant of time; how many pictures came up to be gazed on as it were for a long time, in that instant! pictures of his life before he saw her, and of the things which in his mind belonged to her; the white sandy shore that the low waves broke on; the feathering beech trees, with their tender green leaves in the early summer; king Borrace's burnt ships, great logs clomb over by the briony and clematis; the high-roofed cottage, whereon the loving golden-glowing stone-crop grew;—they came up before his eyes to be gazed at; and the heavy waxen candles burnt lower, the sleeping priest breathed heavily, the others sat in painful silence, nursing their grief; which things Leuchnar saw not because of those sweet pictures, even as they say that the drowning man, when the

first fierce pain and struggle is over, sees no more the green, red-stained, swaying water-weeds, that lap his eyes and mouth, sees rather his old home, and all the things that have been, for memory is cruel-kind to men.

Still the candles flared and flickered in the gusts that stirred the tent, for the wind was rising with the moon; and at last the one nearest the tent door was blown out by a long blast, and the priest who had been sleeping awoke, drew up his body with a start, trying to fix his blinded blinking eyes on Sir Barulf's face, as waked men use to do.

Thereat suddenly Barulf sprung to his feet, as if he too was waking from sleep, and cried out aloud:

"Rouse ye, lords and knights, that we may march to our queen! for, for my part, our queen she shall be; all he said and did was right and true when he was alive; and he was, and is, the wisest of all men, and she too is a right noble woman; was it never told you, knights, how she saved her father when king Borrace's men took him prisoner? What say you, shall she be our queen?"

And they all said "Yea."

Then again said Barulf: "Unless lords Edwin, Hugh, and Adolf gainsay it (as I have no doubt they will not), God save queen Gertha!"

Then they all stood up and said: "God save queen Gertha!"

And Barulf said: "Send a herald round about the army to proclaim Gertha queen, and to bid all to be ready to march some two hours before the setting of the moon. Cause also the knight who carries the great banner to be present, that we may bury the king."

So when all was ready, the noblest of the knights, Barulf and Leuchnar among them, lifted up the bier whereon the king lay, and they marched together towards the burial-place; and the standard-bearer bore the great banner to flap above him, and the priests went before and after, chaunting; and a great body of knights and soldiers went with them as they marched over the plain; and the great moon, risen now, struck on their arms, threw the shadows of them weirdly on the dead that lay so thick among the trees, looked down on by the

summer moon, rustled over by the full-leaved aspens.

They went a full mile, till they came to a place ringed about with aspen trees, about which the enemy that past day had been finally broken.

Here they buried him, standing about in a ring, in as thick ranks as ever in the battle; tearlessly and sternly they watched the incense smoke rising white in the moonlight, they listened to the chaunting, they lifted up their voices, and very musically their sorrow of heart was spoken.

"Listen!" said king Borrace's men, when they heard the singing; "Hark to the psalm-singing dogs! but by about this time to-morrow they will be beginning to leave off singing for good and all, for clearly the fools will wait to be killed, and we shall kill them all, and then hurrah for plunder!"

But the next day about noontide, when they, (not hurrying themselves, for they thought they were quite safe,) when they reached the camp, behold it was empty, for they all marched the night before, and were now still marching along the dusty road leagues and leagues from that battle-field.

Whereon king Borrace, instead of pursuing them, returned to his camp, where he gnashed his teeth for some half-hour or so, and held a great feast, he and his, and stayed on that field for three days,—"To give his army rest," he said.

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Then one evening about sunset-time, as the nuns were singing in their chapel and she with them, as the low sun struck through the western window, and smote upon the gold about the altar till it changed it to a wonderful crimson, upon which the pale painted angels that flecked the gold showed purer and paler than ever — there came, on that sunset evening, far off and faint at first, across, over the roofs of the houses up to the hill whereon the Abbey stood, a sound of shouting mingled with the wailing of women, and the still sadder and more awful wailing of the great trumpets, which seemed to be the gathered sorrow

from the hearts of the men, who themselves could not wail because of their manhood.

Tremblingly the nuns heard it, and their hymns fainted and died, as that awful sound of the indignant sorrow of a whole people going up to heaven rose and deepened, and swept onward: and Gertha turned pale even to the lips, and trembled too, at first, like an aspen-leaf, her heart beating so the while that she could hear the throbbings of it; but with a mighty effort she put back the trembling fever; she said low to herself: "He is dead, and I must not die yet." Then she left her seat and walked, pale in her face like a marble statue, up to the altar; she turned round and faced the door and the sun, none hindering her, for they said, "she waits for news about the battle."

The sun was on her forehead at first as she stood still, but it sunk lower till it touched her lips, and they seemed to quiver (though she held them still) in that flood of light.

So she stood, when lo! the clash of arms in the vestibule, and there entered armed knights without bowing to the altar or crossing themselves, Leuchnar first, then

Barulf and some twenty lords following him; the others gazed about confusedly at first, but Leuchnar going before them all, walked swiftly up to the place where Gertha stood, and fell before her feet, spreading his arms out towards her as he did so, and his iron armour rattled with strange echo about the vaulted roof; she did not look at him, her eyes beheld rather the far off battle-field, and Olaf lying there somewhere under the earth.

"Queen Gertha," he began; but his voice failed him for thronging memories; Sir Barulf and the others drew reverently towards the two, and waited a little way off standing in a half circle: he heaved a great sigh, then bent lower yet, till his mail clinked against the step whereon she stood, then suddenly raised his passionate eyes to hers, and gazed till she was forced to look on him both with heart and eyes.

She beheld him pityingly: he said again: "Queen Gertha!" (thereat she started) "Queen Gertha, he is dead."

"O Leuchnar, I heard the trumpets sing it so, therefore I stayed here for his message; what is it?"

"That you must be Queen over us yet awhile, Lady Gertha."

"Ah! and must I be; may I not go to him at once? for do you know, Leuchnar," (and she stooped down low towards him, and laid her hand on his head as he knelt) "do you know, I saw him just now lying pale and cold, waiting for me, his arms stretched out this way towards me, his changed eyes looking longingly."

"O noblest," he said, "know you not with how many perils we are beset? Whose spirit but his can help us through, and with whom does it dwell but with you?"

She wept: "Leuchnar, though He call for me so, yet perhaps that is because he is sick and weak and scarce knows what he says: and I know that in his heart he desires above all things the safety of this people that goes westward; so I will be Queen till the last foe is vanquished—tell them so."

Then he took her hand; how strangely as he held it did the poor flesh of him quiver, how his heart melted in the midst of his body! he held her hand—and said, "I am Queen Gertha's liegeman." Then

sprung to his feet and called out aloud: "Sir Barulf and Knights all, come and do homage to Gertha, our Queen!"

Then each man knelt before her, and took her hand, and said, "I am Queen Gertha's liegeman."

Afterwards all standing about her together, but lower than she, clashed their swords and axes across her that rang out joyfully, wildly, half madly in that quiet place; while the sun grew lower so that its light fell on her bosom, and her face above looked out sad and pale and calm from among the flashing steel.

So that day Gertha was made Queen. And then all throughout the city you might have heard the ringing of hammers on iron as the armourers did their work, and the clinking of the masons' trowels as they wrought at the walls, strengthening them; for the walls had grown somewhat weak, as it was very many years since any enemy had threatened the city with a land army.

And on the sixth day came King Borrace, having wasted the land far and wide as he marched. Now when he had sent a herald to demand the surrender of that city, who

had not even been suffered to enter it, but had been answered scornfully from the walls, he gnashed his teeth, and mounting a great black horse and armed with a mace rode about, ordering his battle.

Then also Gertha, leaving her hall of Council, went round about the walls with a band of knights: over her robes of purple and crimson her glorious hair flowed loose, and a gold crown marked her, circling her head; while in her hand she bore a slim white rod for a leader's staff.

Very faithful and true were all those in the town, both soldiers and women, but when she drew near to any, their faith grew so, that they seemed transported out of themselves; the women wept for very love, and the men shouted "Gertha! Gertha!" till all the air rang; and King Borrace muttered stupidly from between his teeth, "They are praying to their gods, the fools." Then, turning about, he said to one who was master of his artillery; "Gasgan, son of a dog, bring up the catapults and shoot me down that woman there — there she goes, poking her head over the battlements — quick, O wretch begotten by the Devil's ram."

So Gasgan fixed his catapult and aimed the rugged stone at Gertha as she leaned over the wall, thinking, forgetting the fight and all, for him, just for a single instant.

He looked along the engine once, twice, thrice; once, twice, thrice he started back without letting the catch slip. "Dog," said Borrace, riding up, "why shootest not?"

The man looked up with drops of cold sweat hanging to his brow, then stammered out,

"O my Lord, it is nothing,—that is, there is nothing there now, nor was there when I fitted the levers; but when my hand went to the bolt, each time I saw standing before me that man, the King who was slain the other day, his sword drawn in his hand, and frowning on me terribly; I cannot shoot, my Lord—O Lord, save me!" he shrieked at last, for Borrace, hitching up his great iron mace by its thong into his hand, began to swing it, putting back his lips from his teeth and setting his head forward.

"Son of a rotten sheep, can a ghost stop a stone from a petraria? go and join King Olaf." So he struck him on the uplifted face, between the eyes, and Gasgan fell dead

without a groan, not to be known any more by his wife or mother even, for the mace had shattered his skull.

"Now then," said Borrace, "I will try the ghost of this fellow whom I slew once, and whom I will slay again, God being my help."

He leapt down from his horse, and let his hand fall to the bolt, but just as he did so, before him, calm, but frowning, stood Olaf with bright-gleaming sword and yellow hair blown by the wind: "Art thou not dead then?" shouted Borrace furiously, and with a great curse he drew the bolt.

The stone flew fiercely enough, but not towards Gertha; it went sideways, and struck down two of Borrace's own lords, dashing the life out of the first and maiming the other for life. Borrace flung on to his horse, howling out like a mad dog, "Witch! Witch!" and like a man possessed galloped toward the city as though he would leap wall and ditch, screaming such mad blasphemy as cannot be written.

After him very swiftly galloped some fifty knights and men-at-arms for his protection, and but just in time; for one of the city gates swung open, the drawbridge fell with

a heavy thump, and out rode a single knight armed with a northern axe instead of a spear, slim in figure, but seeming to be good at war. He dashed through the first few of Borrace's horsemen, who came up in scattered fashion because they had been riding as in a race, unhorsing a man to right and left of him as he passed through them, then made right at the King; as they met, Borrace struck out blind with rage at the knight, who putting aside the heavy mace smote him on the side of the helm, that he tumbled clean out of the saddle.

"Gertha! Gertha!" shouted the knight, and he caught Borrace's horse by the bridle, and dashed off towards the gate again, where in the flanking towers the archers stood ready to cover his retreat; for some twenty yards as they galloped furiously on, Borrace dragged in the stirrup, then the stirrup-leather broke, and his horsemen seeing him lie still there, gave up the pursuit of the victorious knight, which was the better advised, as the first flight of arrows from the bowmen had already slain three outright, and wounded five, and they were again getting their strings to their ears.

"Gertha! Leuchnar for Gertha!" rang from the knight again, as he turned just before he crossed the drawbridge; but the last of the enemies stood up in his stirrups and poised his lance in act to throw; but before it left his hand an arrow had leapt through his throat, and he fell dead. "Gertha!" shouted the archer. And then again the drawbridge swayed up, letting little stones fall into the moat from it, down rattled the portcullis, and the heavy gate swung to.

Then presently arose mightily the cry of "Gertha! Gertha, the Queen!"

But withal, when the pirates found that King Borrace was not slain, but only very much bruised, they advanced their engines, and the catapults and balistæ and rams shook the wall, and made many sore cracks in the older parts, and the arrows flew like hail, and the "cats," great wooden towers covered with skins to protect them from fire, began to rise against the town.

Nevertheless, through all that weary day, though the defenders were so few for the great length of wall, they fought cheerfully and with good faith, like the men they were.

So that when they brought news to battered King Borrace, who lay tossing on his bed, concerning how little progress they had made, he gnashed his teeth, and cursed and was right mad.

And all the while through the thunder of the balistæ stones against the wall, through the howling of the catapult stones as they came among them into the city, through the gaunt uplifting of the misshapen rams, through the noise of the sledge-hammers clamping the iron bands of the cat-towers, through the whirr of arrows, through wounds and weariness, and death of friends, still rose the shout of "Gertha! Gertha the Queen! Gertha!"

Guess whether many people lay awake that night, or rather whether any slept at all, save those who were utterly wearied out by that day's fighting or by their own restless excitement. Many did not even try to sleep, but sat round about the cold hearth telling stories; brave stories, mostly of the good old times that were fathers to the good times now; or else they would go about the walls in an eager fever to see what was going on; and some there were who stood all that

night by the bed of some sorely wounded friend; and some, mother, lover, friend, stood also by bedsides holding the cold hands with bitter thoughts that were hard to bear.

That night was dark, with much gusty wind and a drizzle of rain, therefore, though it was August and the days long, yet it was quite dark by nine o'clock, and a little after twilight the enemies' petrariæ left off playing, so that the besieged had rest: but before daybreak the drizzle had changed to steady rain, the wind having fallen.

Even before dawn the camp was a-stir, and two hours afterwards the cat-towers were again building, and the battering had begun again.

And so that day passed, through the rainy hours of it; and about two hours after noon the enemy tried to scale the lowest part of the wall near the harbour. Thereupon Gertha came to that part and looked on the fighters from a tower with a circle of knights round about. Therefore her people waxed so valiant, that though the pirates, fighting like madmen, fixed the ladders to the wall even through the storm of arrows

and stones, (for the tide was out and there was no water now round about the wall,) they were nevertheless driven back with great slaughter.

Also, on the other side of the town, one of the cat-towers was fired, and many perished miserably therein.

That evening Gertha sat and took council with her lords and knights; whereon Leuchnar arose and said, "Noble lady, we must make a sortie, and collect every man, and every boy too, to guard the walls meanwhile, for we are very few to guard so great a city, and the enemy is very many; half our men are utterly worn out with these two days' fighting, coming so close upon their long march; the walls, either old and crumbling, or new and still damp, are cracked in twenty places: they are making a great raft for the crossing of the moat; go to the open window, lady, and you will hear, though it is night, the sound of their hammers busy on it. When King Borrace can put on his armour again, (would that I had slain him outright!) we shall be attacked in twenty places at once, and then I fear it will go hard with the fair city; we must make a

night attack, and do all the burning and slaying that we may."

"Dear knight," said Barulf, "you are young and wise, this thing must be done: let some one get together two thousand of our best men, and those that are least wearied; let them be divided into two bands, and march out, the one by Gate St. George, the other by the East Gate; you, Sir Leuchnar, shall lead the one out of Gate St. George, and I will lead the other."

He said this last quite eagerly, and the colour sprang up to his face: Gertha looked at him half shyly, then spoke to him.

"Nay, Sir Barulf, are you not then too old for blushing? Except for the last word your speech was very wise, but that spoilt it rather, for you must stay behind with us, some one else must go."

She smiled serenely as she spoke; indeed she seemed quite happy now, seeing prophetically perhaps that the end drew near.

"And I?" said Leuchnar, "may I not go?"

"Go, fair knight, and the Lord keep you from all harm."

But Barulf said, smiling also; "As for me, Queen Gertha, you know best, so I will

stay behind, and hope to get a good drive at the three Dukes; they will keep, doubtless; may the Lord make their hands light! but who shall go in my stead?"

She looked round the noble assembly, and her eyes fixed on a young knight who sat over against her; their eyes met, and he seemed to Gertha to resemble somewhat her king, who was waiting for her near the poplar-trees. So she said:

"Sir knight, I know not your name; you I mean, with the blue surcoat and the golden Chevron on it; but will you take this service upon you?"

He had been gazing at her all the time they had sat there, and when he heard her speaking to him it must have seemed to him as if they two were alone together, for he looked this way and that, just as though he feared that some one might hear what they said one to the other; he rose and fell before her feet, not knowing if he were in Heaven or not, for his yearning was so strong that it almost satisfied itself. He muttered something almost inaudible about his unworthiness.

She gazed at him as he lay there with

that inexpressible pity and tenderness in her face, which made all men love her so, trust in her.

"Wait, fair knight, and rise I pray you; have you Father or Mother alive yet?"

"No, Lady," he said, still kneeling, like a suppliant for dear life.

"Any sisters or brothers?"

"None, Lady Gertha, now."

"Have you a Lover?"

"Yea—one whom I love."

Oh how the look of pity deepened in her eyes! what wonder that every nerve trembled in his body?

"And would she give it to your charge to lead a desperate sortie, young as you are, with 'life all before you,' as men say?"

"Will she bid me go?" he said.

"Poor boy!—yet go—in the aftertime we shall meet again, whatever happens, and you and Olaf will be friends, and you will see all his glory. What is your name?"

"Richard."

"Farewell, Richard," and she gave him her hand to kiss; then he departed, saying no word, and sat outside for a minute or two, quite bewildered with his happiness.

Then came Leuchnar, and they went together to see concerning the men they wanted, and as they went they told each other that which was nearest their hearts: then said Richard:

"This is about the happiest time of my life, since I was a child; shall we not fight well, Sir Leuchnar?"

"Yes," he said, "we ought both to praise God, Sir Richard, that, things being so, he has shown us so clearly what to do; I remember now how often in the past days I used after my fashion to torment myself, with thinking how ever I should pass the time if it chanced that my love (when it came, for love of all kinds was long in coming to my dull heart) should fail me; and now God calls us merely to spend a few hours in glorious fight, and then doubtless he will give us forgetfulness till we see her again: and all this I have not at all deserved, for though men's lips formed themselves to speak my name often, praising it for my many good deeds, yet the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and I know wherefore I did such things, not for God's glory, but for my glory."

"Does not God then accept a man's deeds, even if he stumble up to do them through mixed motives, part bad and part good? is it not written, 'by their fruits ye shall know them?'—and your fruits—how often when I have heard men talking of you have I longed to be like you, so brave and wise and good!"

"Ah! the fruits, the fruits!" said Leuchnar, "when I think what the lawful fruits of my thoughts were, I shudder to see how near the Devil's House I have passed. Pray for me in the battle, Richard."

"You are very good and humble, Leuchnar," he said, "and I know not what good the prayers of such an one as I am could do you, but I will pray. Yet I myself have been careless about deeds at all; I have loved beauty so much that I fear if any crime had at any time stood between me and beauty I should have committed that crime to reach it; yet has God been so kind to me, and kindest of all in this, that I who have done nothing all my life long yet, should do this and then die."

"And it is good to do one thing, and then die," said Leuchnar; "farewell."

So they departed each to his own band; and by this time the rain had ceased, the wind had risen, and was now blowing strong from the sea; the clouds were clearing off somewhat, but it was not quite bright; moreover the moon, though it had risen, was pretty much behind the clouds.

The two thousand horsemen went, each thousand in its own direction, very quietly along the streets; they opened Gate St. George quite quietly also, and Leuchnar passed out at the head of his men. Now on each side of that gate was a cat-tower; so a hundred men were sent to each of these to burn them first; they were then to follow the main body, doing such damage as they could to the petrariæ along their way: now this side of the camp happened to be very carelessly guarded, scarcely guarded at all in fact; there was no one in the cats, and the guards about fifty in number, who ought to have been watching them, were asleep some twenty yards off; so both parties succeeded in firing the cats, taking care to put such store of tow and flax mingled with pitch into them that is should be impossible to

drown the flames; moreover the guards awakened by the trampling of the horses and roar of the flames were put to the sword as they rose, sleepy, bewildered, unable to use their arms: then the two hundred men, burning as they went along the altogether unguarded petrariæ on their path, soon joined the main body, and they all rode on swiftly toward the camp, just beginning to stir because of the noise, and the flare of the burning cats. A few minutes' gallop brought Leuchnar to the foremost tents, which were fired, and then through the smoke and flame Leuchnar dashed into King Borrace's camp at the head of his thousand horsemen.

At first there was scarce any resistance, the men were cut down and speared as they ran half-armed from out of the burning tents, and the flames spread in the rising wind; but the alarm too spreading, and many bands coming up in good order, Leuchnar was surrounded almost before he knew it; so in a pause in the fight he looked about him to see how he and his could die most to the advantage of the People; he listened and looked toward the East Gate,

there were no flames to be seen in that quarter where Richard was to have fired the great balistæ and the rams and the raft for the crossing of the moat; for, to leave Leuchnar about to do something desperate, some of King Borrace's men on that side had heard a stir in the town, and the bravest of them had gone to tell him: for at this time he was well nigh mad with his foil, and raged like the Devil himself, to whom indeed he must have been nearly related, and the service of telling him anything like bad news was indeed a desperate one. However as I said, some brave men plucked up heart of grace to go and tell him that the townsmen seemed to be about to make a sally on that side of the camp.

He answered them first of all by throwing four javelins at them, one after another; for he had a sheaf of those weapons put by his bedside for that very purpose; one of them was wounded by this javelin-flight, the others by careful dodging managed to avoid him: then at last he listened to them, and being rather sobered ordered 5000 horsemen to fetch a compass and charge Richard's party in the rear when he was well drawn out

towards the balistæ, which, as they were larger on this side, (for it was on this side that the enemy hoped most to make a breach,) were farther from the walls that they might be out of the range of the townsmen's engines.

So when Richard came out of the East Gate very softly, this band of 5000 men was quite close to him, and the balistæ were guarded by a great body of archers and slingers; and neither horsemen nor archers could be seen, because, the night being gusty, the moon was at that time behind the clouds: so then Rolf coming near to one of the great balistæ sent aside fifty men to fire it, who were straightway attacked in front and flank by arrow-flights, so that all those who were not armed in proof were either slain or too badly wounded to retreat; the rest rode back in haste to the main body, which had halted as soon as Richard saw how matters went: then indeed would Sir Richard and all his men have died without helping Gertha, or the People that went westward, much, as men count help: but the Captain of those 5000 thought he would not attack Richard from behind, lest he

should ride down his own people in the darkness, who he saw had already had some contest with the townsmen; but thinking that he would turn at once toward the town meant to fall on him as he retreated without order.

But Richard, seeing well how things had really gone, turned round to his men, and called out, "Keep well together, and fight well for Gertha"—then, "Sound trumpets, and Richard for Gertha!" So they dashed right at the camp at the gallop, and entered it close to Borrace's tent, where it was not deep but straggling.

Now Borrace, thinking that nothing else could happen but that the townsmen should all be slain close to the walls, was standing near his tent, talking to some of his Captains, and armed all save his helm; for he was now well, or nearly well of his bruises, and intended to lead an attack the next day. So there he stood, and four Captains with him, he twirling his mace about in his nervous excitement, and sometimes looking uneasily at those that stood by, as if he thought they were getting something out of him. Judge of his astonishment when he

heard Richard's shout of "Gertha," and then the thunder of the horse-hoofs.

"Curse that witch!" he ground out from between his teeth, "shall I never hear the last of her? only I think when I have seen her well burnt out of hand, after that"——

"For your life, my lord! for your life! they are coming this way, they will be over us in a minute!" and he turned and ran, and ran well too; and Borrace also began to run, and got clear out of the way of the main body, and would have escaped but that a certain knight, espying him, and knowing well the villainous wolf's face of the man, as he looked over his shoulder, under the clearing moon, turned off a little and rode at him while he ran like ten men, crying out with a great laugh as he knocked him over, "Twice, O King Borrace!"

And indeed King Borrace was not knocked over thrice, for this time the brains were fairly knocked out of his smashed head by the great horse-hoofs, the knight having disdained to use his sword on a runaway, and besides, being a genial sort of man, he had a kind of contemptuous pity for so stupid a brute, and thought to give him a chance.

However when the horsemen had ridden past, the Captains came back to see first of all what had become of their Lord and Master, for they had seen him go over, and with very mixed feelings. They found him as I said with his brains knocked out, and quite dead, whereat the first, Lord Robert, lifted his eyebrows and gave a long whistle in utter astonishment that so slight a matter as a horse should have slain him, for his head seemed to be solid and mostly of oak. But Sebald, the second of them, lifted his foot and dug his heel deep in the already fearfully lacerated face of the dead tyrant, saying as he did so,

"Beast and devil, remember my sister! I told you then I would do this one time or other," (and again he stamped,) "said so openly, yet you took me into your service instead of killing me as I hoped you would, madman that you were."

For in his madness of half-satisfied vengeance it seemed to him that he had slain him with his own hands; but suddenly it came across him how it was, and he said:

"Yet, O God! to think that I am disappointed in my revenge: yet still it is

pleasant to do this, though another man slew him;" and again his heel came down on the dead King's wretched face: then he stooped down and put his hands to the warm blood that flowed from the wounds, and raised them to his lips and drank, and the draught seemed to please him.

Meanwhile Gherard, the third Captain, who had at first stood still without saying a word and apparently in deep thought, suddenly started, and catching hold of Sebald by the shoulder said savagely: "Fool! can't you stop that play-acting? Keep it till you are by yourself, for it is thrown away upon us, I can tell you; and don't you see all of you that this must not be known? quick! quick! help me to carry him into the tent; here Sebald, man, lift and quick——ah!" he said, turning round and glancing about uneasily, "where is Erwelt? but you carry him while I"——

And he darted off after the fourth Captain (Erwelt), who had somehow disappeared, a man of mincing manners, very elaborately dressed.

So Sebald and Robert, as they lifted the body, saw Gherard as he ran in great

bounds towards Erwelt; they saw his hand slide down to his dagger, but there was no weapon in the sheath; he ground his teeth with vexation, but still went on till he had overtaken his man; then he touched him on the shoulder and said: "Erwelt, I want to speak to you." "Well," said the other, "what is it?" But his heart sank and he felt as if Death stood before him, dart and all, as indeed he did, for Gherard was a very strong man, and, as he saw Erwelt's hand go down towards the dagger-hilt, he felled him with a quick blow between the eyes, then before he could recover was kneeling on him; he dragged the broad double-edged dagger from its jewelled sheath, and buried it thrice in Erwelt's breast, then drew it across his throat from ear to ear; then, thrusting the dagger back again into its sheath, after he had carefully wiped it on the white and blue velvet of the dead man's dress, he sprang up and ran back towards the King's tent, leaving the body to lie piteously under the moon which was shining out from dark purple hollows between the clouds.

The light of it flashed on the poor fop's

jewels, shone on his upturned face and gashed throat and feeble nerveless hands. How much more dreadful was that one corpse than all the many, lying now nearer to the walls; than those even who lay with ghastly breakings of the whole frame torn by great stones; or slain by wounds that struck them hap-hazard in strange unlikely places: or slain as they lay already wounded; or who lay with their bodies twisted into unimaginable writhings brought about by pain and fear. All these and many more, many, very many of each sort, they were altogether less horrible than this one corpse of a *murdered man*.

The murderer found the others already in the tent, for Robert had said: "Sebald, don't let us see that; you and I know nothing about it for the present; for we must hold together; and for my part I vote that we let Gherard work for us, he is such a clever fellow."

Sebald made no answer; his eyes were dry, his throat was dry, his heart was dry with intense thinking if by any means he could extend his vengeance beyond the present world. He thought of all the curses

he had ever heard; how meaningless and uninventive they all seemed when set beside his hatred! he thought so that I know not into what uttermost hell he had dragged his own heart; he certainly did not feel as if he were on earth; his head grew dizzy, he could scarcely walk under his burden, but somehow between them they managed to get the body into the tent unperceived.

Then he thought: "I can bear this no longer, I must think of something else just now; but I will make it the work of my whole life hereafter."

So then Gherard burst in, muttering from between his teeth, "so much for one marplot:" and Sebald woke up and was in the world again.

So they began to talk, Robert sitting down and with his elbow on the table, stroking his cheek with his open hand; Sebald standing still, with knit brows, and blood-stained hands crossed over his breast; while Gherard walked up and down, twisting his fingers together behind his back, his cheek all a-flush and his eyes glistening — and Erwelt lay stiffening in the moonlight. So those three fell a-plotting.

Meanwhile such a hubbub and confusion had been going on before the walls as if the fiends were loose; for the archers, when Richard had passed beyond hope of pursuit, having sent a few arrows into the darkness at nothing, turned and looked about them.

Now they knew nothing at all concerning those horsemen who had been sent to take Richard in the rear, so, seeing some helmets glittering in the somewhat doubtful moonlight, they advanced a little towards them, and, thinking as a matter of course that they were from the town, sent two or three flights of arrows among them as an experiment, getting ready to run away in case they should be too many for them, doing all this before the horsemen could shout out that they were from the camp; and when they did so, the townsmen, seeing clearly that Richard and his men were away, opened a heavy fire on everything that they saw, and Borrace's archers believed that the horsemen lied, and still shot all they might.

Whereon the horsemen changed their minds, and settled that these were another band of men from the town whom they had not counted on, and so charged with a good

will, especially as the long-bows and cross-bows and petrariæ were playing on them diligently from the city-walls.

Now the archers were more numerous than the horsemen, and, though not so well armed, fought stoutly, throwing away their bows and using their axes and swords, nor did they find out their mistake till many were slain both of horsemen and archers, and even then they were quite ready to go on with that work from sheer rage and vexation of heart; but restraining themselves, and being restrained by their leaders, they got separated somehow, and marched back to their own quarters, where one and all swore that they would stay, nor move again that night for man or Devil, whatever happened.

And so they fell to drinking all they might. But Sir Richard and all his, having won through the camp with but little opposition, (for the enemy were all drawn off other-where,) crossed the river that lay beyond, by a broad shallow ford that he knew well, (higher up it passed by that cottage,) then took mere bridle-ways and waggon-roads through the woods that lay beyond the river, after he had told his men

that he intended making a circuit and falling from behind on that part of the camp where Leuchnar was. "For he is probably hard pressed by this time," said he, "the sortie being from the first somewhat desperate and wild, though necessary." And he made this circuit lest he should be cut off before he could reach Leuchnar; had he known that there would be no pursuit, (there would have been but for Borrace's death, and the happy clash between the horsemen and archers)—had he known all this he would certainly not have gone so far about, or gone through such intricate ways where the men could not help straggling.

So the rain-drops fell in showers on their armour as they past, from the low tree-boughs brushed by their crests and lowered spears; the moon flashed on the wet leaves that danced in the rushing sea-wind; with whirr of swift wings the wood-pigeon left the wood.

How often had Richard wandered here in the past days! what thoughts were his in those old times, of the glory of his coming manhood! what wonder at the stories of lovers that he read, and their deeds! what brave purposes never to be fulfilled! yet he

meant them then honestly enough, yet he was to do one deed at the last if only one, that was something; and as he thought this he straightway drove thoughts of all other things from his mind, and thought of what he should do now.

He called a halt, and listened; then perceiving clearly that there was no pursuit at all, he led his men out of the woods, by a way he knew well, round toward Gate St. George, but cautiously and quietly for fear of an attack from the camp.

Then after a while they halted again, and he heard the noise of the irregular *mêlée* I have told you about, and could scarce account for it; he heard the noise of the fight about where Leuchnar was; and he heard withal another sound that made his heart beat with hope: it was a far-off sound swelling and fainting in the rise and fall of the southwest wind that blew from over the sea, the sound of triumphant trumpets: he leaned forward from his saddle to listen better, and many a soldier's eyes sparkled as he cried out suddenly, "Victory! it is Edwin —quick to Leuchnar!" So away they went toward Gate St. George at a smart pace.

They drew rein when they came within a few minutes' gallop from the camp that their horses might not go blown into the battle, then advanced with as little noise as possible, till they drew near and saw the enormous masses of the enemy surging round something which they knew well to be Leuchnar in a desperate case.

Then shouted their leader, "Richard! Richard for Gertha!" and with one mighty charge, which scattered the enemy to right and left, they were buried in the enormous multitude that was in vain striving to break Leuchnar's array.

For he, trying to win his way back to the city that he might sally out at the East Gate to the aid of Sir Richard, beset as he thought he was, as he was doing this he was first cut off from the city and driven back towards the camp, and then surrounded.

Whereupon the horsemen having dismounted formed a great square with closely planted shields, and long spears set out like the teeth of a great beast, and on this square King Borrace's horsemen, that were King Borrace's no more now, had wasted their strength for long: for howsoever many men

of it were slain by the arrows and slings or by the hurling of the long lances, yet the living filled up the places of the dead, and the square, though lessening every moment, was not broken when Richard made that charge, and joined Leuchnar: having hewn his way through with most of his men to that square of serried spears, "Brother!" he shouted, "hold out yet awhile, for Edwin is coming in triumph over the sea, and we must live till then."

So they joined their two bands, and made a thicker and larger square than before, having cleared a space by one or two desperate charges, and soon the fight was fiercer than ever.

But the men fell fast before the arrow-flights and they grew utterly wearied with standing there on foot; in pauses of the fight very anxiously did Richard and Leuchnar listen, and they heard a snatch now and then of the dear trumpet-music, and hoped, or tried to hope: yet it seemed that they must die before help came, the greater part at least. Then an arrow whistled, and Leuchnar staggered and bowed forward; he was wounded, not mortally indeed, but it dizzied

and confused him. Almost at the same time the crowd opened, and there rose a shout of "Gherard! Gherard!" Forthwith a fresh band of horsemen charged, all armed in proof and splendidly mounted, with Gherard himself at the head of them.

How it all happened Richard scarce knew, but so it was that they broke the terrible hedge of spears, and presently each man found himself fighting separately or with one or two friends about him; tired men too against fresh ones, men on foot against horsemen, and all things seemed desperate.

Yet even then between all the clash of the battle Richard heard the roar of the bells from all the belfries and the shouting of the people. Edwin had landed. Then as he thought of this he grew half mad to think that they should die before the very eyes of their friends, and shouted out "Gertha! fight on, brave lads, and gather together all you may!" He with some half dozen of his own men tried to gather others again, but, while he struggled desperately, his great sword flashing this way and that, but rising duller from every stroke because of the blood on it, he was suddenly borne away,

and Leuchnar beheld him alone amidst a ring of foes, saw his sword still flashing for a little, then saw him fall with many wounds and lie dead, at peace at last.

He himself, though surrounded by a band of friends, was sorely wounded; and, sick with pain and loss of blood, he had nearly fainted; and the few around him were falling, falling fast under axe and sword and spear, when lo! the gates open, and the cry of "Edwin for Gertha!" rings all about, thousands pour out of the great gates, over the bridge, there is a sharp fight, and the bodies at least of Leuchnar and Richard are rescued.

For the pirates are driven back to their camp, not to stay quiet there for long; for even as they stand at bay about their tents the word goes that Borrace is slain; nor only so; the moon sinks, the east begins to redden, and within an hour after her setting many new spears fleck the clear light; the advanced guard of the Lord Hugh's victorious army who have marched night-long to come to the help of the fair city.

Close them all about, brave sons of the men that go westward! Borrace is dead,

Gherard is dead, Erwelt is dead, Sebald lies bleeding to death from four sore wounds, Robert fled soon, but was drowned in crossing the river.

The cats are on fire, the petrariæ are in ashes, all the camp is one blaze, everywhere the foe are throwing their arms away and crying for quarter, soon they are all slain, wounded, or prisoners.

Meanwhile a messenger, pale and worn out, is brought to Gertha, and kneels down before her feet; he says, "Lady, I have a message for you." (O Gertha! words spoken before.)

"Quick, good man," she says, "for these things draw to an end;" and a smile of quiet triumph passes across her pale face.

"Three days ago," he says, "the Emperor strove to force the passes; he and three of his captains were slain, and my Lord Adolf will be here soon."

"Thank God!" she says, "but you, poor man, what reward for you? ah! sleep has overmastered him:" for he has fallen forward before her so that his head rests on her feet; she touches him, takes his hand to raise him up; it is stone-cold, he is dead.

But for these men of King Borrace — let the wounded go to our hospitals that they may learn there something of love which they have not even dreamed about as yet; let the slain be buried, and lie under the earth, under the grass among the roots of the land they came to conquer: let the prisoners depart unarmed, but with provisions for their journey, let them cross the frontier, and never trouble the good land more, lest a worse thing befall them.

Chapter V.

WHAT EDITH THE HANDMAIDEN SAW FROM THE WAR-SADDLE.

And in the fresh morning sat Gertha the Queen in the body, while her spirit was a long way off, and round about her sat the Lords and Knights with flushed joyful faces, she alone pale though calm and serene, for she too was joyful.

Then into the midst of the great hall they bore Leuchnar dying from his many wounds, not in great pain, for his spirit was leaving his body gently, as if he were worn out merely.

And Gertha rose from her throne and went to meet them that bore him, and there was a flutter along the tapestry that the hall was hung with, as the wind rushed through the opened door, and therewithal Gertha woke, her spirit came again as if Olaf had sent it.

So she gazed at him as he had hoped she might, as a Queen on her faithful subject: before this, often a certain uneasy feeling, not pity exactly, used to come across her when she saw him; it used to seem such a hard thing to her that it should be thus;

it was just such a feeling as might have turned to love with one less constant than Gertha: but now even this was gone, and Leuchnar felt that it was so, even by the look of her eyes upon him.

And he, raising himself, hardly said to her, "Queen Gertha, I am come to say farewell for a little."

"Poor Leuchnar, who loved me so!"

"Nay," he said, "happy Leuchnar, who loves you still! in the time to come it may be that lovers, when they have not all they wish for, will say, 'Oh! that we might be as Leuchnar, who died for Queen Gertha in the old time!'"

"True," she said, "farewell, Sir Leuchnar."

Oh! how eagerly he took her hand! "Happy Leuchnar," he said faintly, then, "Domine, in manus tuas," and he fell asleep, his head falling back.

For a short time she stood, holding his dead hand; then gently disengaged it and laid it with the other one, crossing them downwards.

Then they carried him out again silently; and again ran that tremour through the

gold wrought hangings, and her spirit had gone away again.

And within a while, as the great sun rose higher, came the sound of trumpets, and the roar of the bells from all the belfries: Adolf was come.

How near the end drew.

That noontide was windless, cloudless, and very bright, except that a soft haze had sprung up everywhere from the moist earth, into which all things far and fair melted.

She came from the midst of that knot of Lords that had clustered about her, and with her dark hair loose, stood in the balcony above the people, and through the hearts of all thrilled her clear speech.

"God has been very good to us, friends, and we have conquered, and now you must let me go as you promised. And you may grieve that I must go, and wish me back often, but still I must go: it is not only because I wish to go that I must leave you, but I cannot help it: I think, nay am sure, that this also is best both for you and me. If I were Queen much longer you would be disappointed with me, yet would not say so, because you love me.

"Think now! I am but Gertha, the peasant's daughter, and I know it was only the spirit of your dead Lord working in me that made you love me so. But if I were Queen for long I should come to be only Gertha again; so I must go. And if you will, let Barulf, who is old, but very wise, be King."

There was sad silence for a little when she had finished, then a confused sound of weeping, and sobs, and earnest wishes went up towards the balcony, where she stood with her arms lying down her side: already she looked as if she were a different kind of being from them: she said,

"Will you have Barulf for your King? if you will, say so to pleasure me; then farewell."

They shouted, "Barulf! God save King Barulf!" and lo! even in that shout she had vanished, like an angel that comes from heaven when God lends him, and goes to heaven again when God calls him.

Gertha walked over the field of battle; no meadow of sweet-waving grass and lovely flowers, but something very horrible to gaze at, to pass over.

Yet she did not seem to take note of any of its horrors: her handmaiden was with her; but when they came within fifty yards of the aspen circle where he lay, she charged her to stop, and watch all that came to pass there, that she might tell the people hereafter.

So the handmaiden sat down there on the mournful battle-field on some great war-saddle that had been thrown down there.

But Gertha, when she had kissed her, left her and walked toward those aspen-trees; she was clad in her old peasants' raiment again, and was quite without ornament of gold or jewels; only, her black hair hung braided on either side of her face and round about her head was a garland of yellow flowering stone-crop, such as he wore in his helmet that battle-day: but now when she entered the circle of aspens there seemed to be silence over all the earth, except that when she first stepped among the shadows of the trees, a faint breeze rose out of the south, and the lightly-hung leaves shivered, the golden haze trembled.

Now although all the rest of the battle-field was trodden into bloody mud, dry now again,

but loaded with all dreadful things, this spot yet kept the summer flowers, neither was there any mark of his grave.

So there lay down Gertha, and the blue speedwell kissed her white cheek; there her breath left her, and she lay very still, while the wind passed over her now and then, with hands laid across her breast.

Nevertheless this was what Edith, her handmaiden, said to Barulf the King, and his Lords and Knights:

"And so I sat on the war-saddle and watched, and as my Lady stepped forward to enter that circle of trees, I saw my Lord Olaf, the King, as clearly as before he died, step forward to meet her, and he caught her in his arms, and kissed her on the mouth and on both cheeks.

"And they two were together there for hours (talking it seemed), sometimes sitting on the flowers and grass; (for that spot, my lords, is not trodden as the rest of the field is;) sometimes walking from tree to tree with fingers interlaced.

"But just about sunset time, I felt as if I must needs go and speak to my dear Lady once again, and hold her hand again: so I

went up trembling; and lo! my Lord Olaf was not there any more, and I saw my Lady Gertha only, lying dead upon the flowers, with her hands crossed over her breast, and a soft wind that came from the place where the sun had set shook the aspen leaves. So I came away."

Thereat the King and his Knights wondered.

And the People raised a mighty Church above the place where they lay, in memory of Olaf's deeds and Gertha's love: and soon about the Church there gathered a fair City, that was very famous in the after-time.

Yet it was strange that this Church, though the people wrought at it with such zeal and love, was never finished: something told them to stop by then they had reached the transepts of it: and to this day the mighty fragment, still unfinished, towering so high above the city roofs toward the sky, seems like a mountain cliff that went a wandering once, and by earnest longing of the lowlanders was stayed among the poplar trees for ever.

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THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES *was born in Clifton, England, on the 20th of July, 1803, and died at Basel, from a self-administered poison on the 26th of January, 1849. During his life-time he had published nothing save two small volumes:* The Improvisatore, (*1821,*) *of which not over six copies are believed to exist, and,* (*1822,*) The Brides' Tragedy. *In 1850, one of his oldest friends, Thomas Forbes Kelsall, brought out the sinister and, it must be confessed abortive tragedy,* Death's Jest-Book, *followed in 1851 by* Poems *with a memoir, both long since become collectors' rarities.*[1]

The genius of Beddoes was of an essentially saturnine not to say macabre *order. He was a belated Elizabethan who had strayed into the nineteenth century; whose place, considered from a dramatic standpoint, is beside Cyril Tourneur, John*

---

1 *The true story of Beddoes' life and death was first made known when Mr. Gosse re-edited his works. See The Poetical Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes edited with a Memoir by Edmund Gosse, 2 vols. Fcap 8vo, London, 1890; also The Letters of Thomas Lovell Beddoes, same editor, 1894.*

Marston,—or "the many," as Mr. Swinburne has so happily summarized the anonymous playwrights of that superb period. Compared, perhaps more fitly, with his contemporaries,—with R. H. Horne, George Darley, Charles Wells, all of them singing men who somehow failed of wide attainment,—and there is no question of his lyric achievements. His songs will live even though artificial; and Victorian letters would be so much the less splendid, so much the poorer for us, without them.

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DREAM-PEDLARY.

I.

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rung the bell,
What would you buy?

II.

A cottage lone and still,
With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
This would I buy.

III.

But there were dreams to sell
  Ill didst thou buy;
Life is a dream, they tell,
  Waking, to die.
Dreaming a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise;
  And, if I had the spell
  To call the buried well,
    Which one would I?

IV.

If there are ghosts to raise,
  What shall I call,
Out of hell's murky haze,
  Heaven's blue pall?
Raise my loved long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy. —
  There are no ghosts to raise;
  Out of death lead no ways;
    Vain is the call.

V.

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue
  No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
  And breathe thy last.

So out of Life's fresh crown
Fall like a rose-leaf down.
  Thus are the ghosts to woo;
  Thus are all dreams made true,
    Ever to last!

DIRGE.

To her couch of evening rest
  'Neath the sun's divinest west,
Bear we, in the silent car,
This consumed incense star,
This dear maid whose life is shed,
And whose sweets are sweetly dead.

BALLAD OF HUMAN LIFE.

I.

WHEN we were girl and boy together,
We tossed about the flowers
And wreathed the blushing hours
Into a posy green and sweet.
I sought the youngest, best,
And never was at rest
Till I had laid them at thy fairy feet.
But the days of childhood they were fleet,
And the blooming sweet-briar breathed weather,
When we were boy and girl together.

II.

Then we were lad and lass together,
And sought the kiss of night
Before we felt aright,
Sitting and singing soft and sweet.
The dearest thought of heart
With thee 'twas joy to part,
And the greater half was thine, as meet.
Still my eyelid's dewy, my veins they beat
At the starry summer-evening weather,
When we were lad and lass together.

And we are man and wife together,
  Although thy breast, once bold
  With song, be closed and cold
Beneath flowers' roots and birds' light feet.
  Yet sit I by thy tomb,
  And dissipate the gloom
With songs of loving faith and sorrow sweet.
And fate and darkling grave kind dreams do cheat,
That, while fair life, young hope, despair and death are,
  We're boy and girl, and lass and lad, and man and
    wife together.

A LAMENT.

In the twilight, silent smiled
  All alone the daisy's eyelid,
Fringed with pink-tipped petals piled.
—In the morning 'twas no more;
In its place a gout of gore.
Break of day was break of heart,
Since, dear maiden, dead thou art.

I.

"SHALL I be your first love, lady, shall I be your first?
Oh! then I'll fall before you, down on my velvet knee,
And deeply bend my rosy head and press it upon thee,
And swear that there is nothing more, for which my heart doth thirst,
But a downy kiss, and pink,
Between your lips' soft chink."

II.

"Yes, you shall be my first love, boy, and you shall be my first,
And I will raise you up again unto my bosom's fold;
And, when you kisses many one on lip and cheek have told,
I'll let you loose upon the grass, to leave me if you durst;
And so we'll toy away
The night besides the day."

III.

"But let me be your second love, but let me be your second,
For then I'll tap so gently, dear, upon your window pane,
And creep between the curtains in, where never man has lain,
And never leave thy gentle side till the morning star hath beckoned,
Within the silken lace
Of thy young arms' embrace."

IV.

"Well thou shalt be my second love, yes, gentle boy, my
second,
And I will wait at eve for thee within my lonely bower,
And yield unto thy kisses, like a bud to April's shower,
From moon-set till the tower-clock the hour of dawn hath
reckoned,
And lock thee with my arms
All silent up in charms."

V.

"No, I will be thy third love, lady, ay I will be the third,
And break upon thee, bathing, in woody place alone,
And catch thee to my saddle and ride o'er stream and stone,
And press thee well, and kiss thee well, and never speak a word,
'Till thou hast yielded up
The margin of love's cup."

VI.

"Then thou shalt not be my first love, boy, nor my second,
nor my third;
If thou'rt the first, I'll laugh at thee, and pierce thy flesh
with thorns;
If the second, from my chamber pelt with jeering laugh
and scorns;
And if thou darest be the third, I'll draw my dirk unheard
And cut thy heart in two, —
And then die, weeping you."

SONG OF THE STYGIAN NAIADES.

I.

PROSERPINE may pull her flowers,
Wet with dew or wet with tears,
Red with anger, pale with fears,
Is it any fault of ours,
If Pluto be an amorous king,
And comes home nightly, laden,
Underneath his broad bat-wing,
With a gentle, mortal maiden?
Is it so, Wind, is it so?
All that you and I do know
Is, that we saw fly and fix
'Mongst the reeds and flowers of Styx,
Yesterday,
Where the Furies made their hay
For a bed of tiger cubs,
A great fly of Beelzebub's,
The bee of hearts, which mortals name
Cupid, Love, and Fie for shame.

II.

Proserpine may weep in rage,
  But, ere I and you have done
  Kissing, bathing in the sun,
What I have in yonder cage,
Bird or serpent, wild or tame,
  She shall guess and ask in vain;
  But, if Pluto does't again,
It shall sing out loud his shame.
  What hast caught then? What hast caught?
  Nothing but a poet's thought,
  Which so light did fall and fix
  'Mongst the reeds and flowers of Styx,
      Yesterday,
Where the Furies made their hay
For a bed of tiger cubs,—
A great fly of Beelzebub's,
The bee of hearts, which mortals name
Cupid, Love, and Fie for shame.

I.

WHO tames the lion now?
Who smooths Jove's wrinkles now?
Who is the reckless wight
That in the horrid middle
Of the deserted night
Doth play upon man's brain,
As on a wanton fiddle,
The mad and magic strain,
The reeling, tripping sound,
To which the world goes round?
Sing heigh! ho! diddle!
And then say—
Love, quotha, Love? nay, nay!
It is a spirit fine
Of ale or ancient wine,
Lord Alcohol, the drunken fay,
Lord Alcohol alway!

II.

Who maketh the pipe-clay man
Think all that nature can?
Who dares the gods to flout,
Lay fate beneath the table,

And maketh him stammer out
A thousand monstrous things,
For history a fable,
Dish-clouts for kings?
And sends the world along
Singing a ribald song
Of heigho! Babel?
Who, I pray—
Love, quotha, Love? nay, nay!
It is a spirit fine
Of ale or ancient wine,
Lord Alcohol, the drunken fay,
Lord Alcohol alway.

FRAGMENT.

FOLLY hath now turned out of door
Mankind and Fate, who were before
Jove's Harlequin and Clown;
The World's no stage, no tavern more—
Its sign the Fool's ta'en down.
With poppy rain and cypress dew
Weep all, for all who laughed at you,
For goose grass is no medicine more,
But the owl's brown eye's the sky's new blue.
Heigho! Foolscap!

TWO SONGS FROM "THE BRIDES' TRAGEDY."

I.

A HO! A ho!
Love's horn doth blow,
And he will out a-hawking go.
His shafts are light as beauty's sighs,
And bright as midnight's brightest eyes,
And round his starry way
The swan-winged horses of the skies,
With summer's music in their manes,
Curve their fair necks to zephyr's reins,
And urge their graceful play.

A ho! A ho!
Love's horn doth blow,
And he will out a-hawking go.
The sparrows flutter round his wrist,
The feathery thieves that Venus kissed
And taught their morning song,
The linnets seek the airy list,
And swallows too, small pets of Spring,
Beat back the gale with swifter wing,
And dart and wheel along.

A ho! A ho!
Love's horn doth blow,
And he will out a-hawking go.
Now woe to every gnat that skips
To filch the fruit of ladies' lips,
His felon blood is shed;
And woe to flies, whose airy ships
On beauty cast their anchoring bite,
And bandit wasp, that naughty wight,
Whose sting is slaughter-red.

II.

SONG, *by two voices.*

First Voice.

WHO is the baby, that doth lie
Beneath the silken canopy
Of thy blue eye?

Second.

It is young Sorrow, laid asleep
In the crystal deep.

Both.

Let us sing his lullaby,
Heigho! a sob and a sigh.

First Voice.

What sound is that, so soft, so clear,
Harmonious as a bubbled tear
Bursting, we hear?

Second.

It is young Sorrow, slumber breaking,
Suddenly awaking.

Both.

Let us sing his lullaby,
Heigho! a sob and a sigh.

SONG FROM "TORRISMOND."

How many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity:—
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain,
Unravelled from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star:—
So many times do I love again.

SONGS FROM "DEATH'S JEST-BOOK."

I.

THE swallow leaves her nest,
The soul my weary breast;
But therefore let the rain
On my grave
Fall pure; for why complain?
Since both will come again
O'er the wave.

The wind dead leaves and snow
Doth scurry to and fro;
And, once, a day shall break
O'er the wave,
When a storm of ghosts shall shake
The dead, until they wake
In the grave.

II.

If thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep;
And not a sorrow
Hang any tear on your eyelashes;
Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow,
In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then die, dear, die;
'Tis deeper, sweeter,
Than on a rose bank to lie dreaming
With folded eye;
And then alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou'lt meet her
In eastern sky.

III.

Old Adam, the carrion crow,
The old crow of Cairo;
He sat in the shower, and let it flow
Under his tail and over his crest;
And through every feather
Leaked the wet weather;
And the bough swung under his nest;
For his beak it was heavy with marrow.
Is that the wind dying? O no;
It's only two devils, that blow
Through a murderer's bones, to and fro,
In the ghosts' moonshine.

Ho! Eve, my grey carrion wife,
When we have supped on kings' marrow,
Where shall we drink and make merry our life?
Our nest it is queen Cleopatra's skull,
'Tis cloven and cracked,
And battered and hacked,
But with tears of blue eyes it is full:
Let us drink then, my raven of Cairo.
Is that the wind dying? O no;
It's only two devils, that blow
Through a murderer's bones, to and fro,
In the ghosts' moonshine.

IV.

A CYPRESS-BOUGH, and a rose-wreath sweet,
A wedding-robe, and a winding-sheet,
A bridal-bed and a bier.
Thine be the kisses, maid,
And smiling Love's alarms.
And thou, pale youth, be laid
In the grave's cold arms,
Each in his own charms,
Death and Hymen both are here;
So up with scythe and torch,
And to the old church porch,
While all the bells ring clear:
And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

Now tremble dimples on your cheek,
Sweet be your lips to taste and speak,
For he who kisses is near:
By her the bridegod fair,
In youthful power and force;
By him the grizard bare,
Pale knight on a pale horse,
To woo him to a corse.
Death and Hymen both are here;
So up with scythe and torch,
And to the old church porch,

While all the bells ring clear:
And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

V.

We do lie beneath the grass
In the moonlight, in the shade
Of the yew-tree. They that pass
Hear us not. We are afraid
They would envy our delight,
In our graves by glow-worm night.
Come follow us, and smile as we;
We sail to the rock in the ancient waves,
Where the snow falls by thousands into the sea,
And the drowned and the shipwrecked have
happy graves.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

THE publishers of THE BOOKMAN are able to announce that, in addition to the other attractions which it will present to its readers in the coming year (the fifth of its existence), they have secured a Serial Story of the time of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION,

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As master of the conte *in English,—the episode, fragment if you will,—not one of his stories but possesses innate charm. The same subject in other hands had like enough proved flat failure: with Mr. Wedmore there is just the inevitable touch noted by Pater when summing up Du Bellay;—"a certain silvery grace of fancy nearly all the pleasure of which is in the surprise at the happy and dexterous way in which a thing slight in itself is handled."*

In Orgeas and Miradou *the theme rises by exquisite gradations to almost unbear-*

1 Pastorals of France, *1877;* Renunciations, *1893;* English Episodes, *1894.*

2 Studies in English Art, *1876;* The Masters of Genre Painting, *1880;* Life of Balzac, (*in Great Writers Series*), *1890.*

able analytic poignancy. Not the possibilities of the Unseen, but upon the man's attitude of expectation are we directed to concentrate our thought. Orgeas "was a poet who had written no poetry," therefore—pathetic unreason!—Miradou was not beyond recall;—there was the chance of return to her human dwelling-place,—an old-world survival of belief from Classic ages. One must seek for analogous effects, not in prose, but in the verse of William Ernest Henley. Has he not also told us of—

> *"A little, exquisite Ghost*
> *Between us, smiling with the serenest eyes*
> *Seen in this world, and calling, calling still*
> *In that clear voice whose infinite subtleties*
> *Of sweetness, thrilling back across the grave*
> *Break the poor heart to hear."*

FOR MAY:

SONGS IN ABSENCE, AND OTHER POEMS
By
ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

ORGEAS AND MIRADOU.

DREAM OF PROVENCE.

ORGEAS AND MIRADOU.[1]

DREAM OF PROVENCE.

ORGEAS and Miradou had lived together — together with no third — since the mother had gone from them; and that was thirteen years ago, when Miradou was five. Since then it was her father who had cared for her: the mother's name was never named between them. Had she died amongst them in her recognized place, they must from time to time have talked of her, as well as mourned. Those two hearts, made for affection — made for it so much that it was the air they breathed, the bread they fed on — must have kept of her their tenderest memory. Death, had he come to her there, could never have really separated them — could not have banished her from all their thought. Some communion still was possible. But the mother had no likeness to these two. Callous at first, and then a disgrace and a humiliation, she had gone out of their lives for ever. One luminous night, between two shining days of August, she and a Piedmontese lover had tramped towards Italy —

[1] The masculine termination of the feminine name is a Provençal characteristic. In Grasse, *Ave Maria!* is *Vou saludi Mario!*

by the long mule paths (was it?) and the olive groves, and then by the bare hills.

At first, of course, to Orgeas, the disaster had seemed irreparable. Out of doors, a shame greatest of all because the lover was no Grassois and no Frenchman, but of the hated Piedmontese — rivals in life, and, there in Grasse at least, rivals of necessity in labour. Indoors, it was a sorrow to be brooded on, and it made a dire loneliness. The foreman came home from the printing press, and none but the little child was at home to greet him.

But the child had taken her place. Months passed, and life became endurable — years, and life became sweet. Parents and children in France are the best of friends generally; even when no special circumstance and no peculiar demand for affection, bring them more closely together. With Orgeas there was the special circumstance and the peculiar demand. Link upon link was formed, of interest, kindness, and association. That was the visible chain. But the invisible? Well! — they were parent and child, with a mysterious and profound affinity.

As Orgeas was not wanting in imagination, for a man of his class, he recognized that if,

because of his deep love of her, Miradou sufficed for him, not in a measure quite so unlimited could he suffice for Miradou. Her childish instinct for comradeship, her girlish longing for the confidence and gaiety that may exist between equals, Orgeas never restrained. She was helpful at home, in all material things, and in her recognition of his love for her altogether responsive. But there was no excuse for laying on her few young years the burden of later times. She was happy at home; and beyond home, in the great sunshine, in the sparkling Southern day, Miradou, with her clear eyes and all her figure's lines, laughed herself into womanhood.

Yet if, since childhood, she had known no trouble greater than the little bafflings which give a piquancy to attained pleasure, and no exertion harder than the labour which just sweetens rest, it was not circumstances that were at the bottom of that: no outside influence — not even a father's — had brought it about: it was not produced to order. Some of her happy days she owed, of course, to the favoured land, and to the simple life, "cursed with no wide desires and spacious aims." How much she owed, besides, to

her own nature, to her pure self and to no other, to her being that which she was — to her gay heart that under her glistening eyes danced in its joy of living! Orgeas knew that — knew that she brought to him a something, undefined, inestimable, which he had never given her. "Eighteen years!" he reflected — and he understood her well — and each year gained upon the last in bewitching merriment and the charm of an occasional and fitting gravity. Eighteen years in which she was warmth and light to him — the sight of her quickening his footsteps, her movements lifting his soul like a happy and familiar, yet ever varied air! Eighteen years, Miradou! And now she was dead.

Dead; yet not dead. No! dead she could not be. Her room indeed was empty; her father, alone. But she was not dead. She would return.

"On the ninth day," said Orgeas to himself. He said it aloud, filling himself with courage. This was the fourth day only. "On the ninth! *Elle reviendra!*"

Yet it was true that two days since they had put her in her grave in the cemetery, and on the sun-smitten road, on the descent

towards Draguignan, slowly, with hat in hand, as the chief mourner, Orgeas, with blanched face and dreaming eyes, had walked, with his comrades, behind the coffin of pine. And the upturned earth in the cemetery — hurriedly, loosely replaced — was fresh to-day, unlike every other grave, that had quietly settled, with its recording words, and cross of beads, and wreath of camomile. They had buried Miradou — though it was but so lately. They had laid her down. How could she return?

If you had gone into her bed-room, in which Miradou died, if you had gone there that evening, you would have seen that though no sign of death or of calamity showed in the little chamber, there was a bed unmade and sheets disordered — a pillow with the imprint of a head, and, on the open bed, the lines, as one might fancy, made by the pressure of a figure light and tall. A brush, that was Miradou's, lay on the table. There were hairpins there, and a ribbon. On a peg, near the window, hung Miradou's red pink gown: next to it, the broad hat, low crowned, of brownish yellow straw, which had sheltered her head from the assault of the sun.

That the things were left there so, and all the place untouched, when the owner of the

things, who was the room's mistress, had been three days dead, was due to a Provençal fancy — a faith to some, and by all outwardly maintained — that the hour our observation registers as that of death is not for this life after all quite surely the last. Is it the tenderness, perhaps, of a people who must owe something to Classic thought, and may copy Classic reticence? — the delicacy of those on whose memorials of the dead was never written the rude truth: dead they were not averred to be, but absent, journeying, called for a time to ways more distant than those their kindred had trodden — paths, nevertheless, from which return was not cut off. Absent, and on a journey: it could never even be hinted that they who had been loved here had finally gone. Yes: the Provençal adaptation of that tender Classic thought, the Provençal provision for a sentiment so deep that it must not be suddenly shocked, lay in this old tradition of a few days' grace — of a humane reprieve. In some vague measure, death was sometimes a choice. If it was chosen hurriedly, might it not too be repented of?

Whatever may have been the case with the mass of his comrades, Orgeas followed

in no merely formal manner the fancy of his land. He was a poet who had written no poetry. His careful common sense in daily life allowed him still to be a dreamer of high dreams. Anxious he was, but he was not thoroughly downcast. Until the ninth day, Miradou's fate was unsealed.

So much the popular belief contained to comfort him; and to it he added his own, born of his knowledge of her love of life, of her gay heart, and of his great yearning. Placed in the grave but three days since —placed in the grave so lightly—she was wandering now. This was the time of suspense. When it was over, would she return to the life she had gladdened, or to the dark tomb she had so shortly rested in?

For Orgeas, in his mood to-day, there could be but one answer. He paced from one to another of the rooms they had dwelt in—the little flat, high up in the cramped dark street, far up above its shadows and its straitness—his room, her room, and the living room. Back to her room again: the window opened wide, that her returning soul might find no obstruction. The caged bird she had tended sang in the sun, in its

window-cage. Outside was the great sky, the tall cathedral tower, the bulky soap-works, the distillery chimney. Below, the olive gardens sloped in broad grey waves towards a waveless sea. It was all as it had ever been, these many years of his joy in her. And Orgeas's face brightened with confidence — a certain hope so soon to be realised. "*Elle se promène. 'Faut attendre!* On the ninth day, at the latest — before that — before the ninth day, *bien sûr — Miradou reviendra!*"

He went each morning to his work, punctually as usual. He got himself his breakfast. A neighbour, who pitied him — but with whose pity he was scarcely concerned — tidied his rooms for him, and made his bed, leaving the chamber of the absent untouched and sacred. It was not, of course, necessary — "*non vraiment ce n'était pas la peine*" — to think of any paid service. Soon the bright spirit of that so limited household would be again in the accustomed place. "*Bien sûr! Elle reviendra.*"

And so the time went on.

The seventh day, he fancied his child upon her walk to Maganosc — upon the road acacias bordered, upon the great hillside,

pursuing its almost level course some half-way up the heights, between plain and mountain ridge; winding to a ravine, and out again to a platform, a promontory, some spur of the particular hill; yet always level, and tending slowly and with many a *détour*, towards Le Bar and the grey mountains. It was her favourite walk with her girl comrades or himself, upon a Sunday, and most of all in Summer and in that Provençal Spring which is a first Summer and a fresher one. She must be now upon that favourite road, tree-shaded, hill-shaded, richly screened from the great westering sun — with half Provence beneath her, its swelling lowlands, flowers and farms, and, last, in the great distance, the abrupt rising of the jagged Esterel, for a sharp horizon.

Just past the little Octroi, the road turned suddenly inwards, made for a minute as if to pierce the hillside, then thought differently, crossed by a high bridge the deep ravine in which a stream gurgled, and then turned to the right again, where, on the gentlest slope, just close below, masses of violet plants grew under the light leaf of the olive, and by the trunks of the olive-trees stood the glazed water pots, burly as casks, holding

the water with which the violet plants were from time to time moistened.[1]

This year the winter had been severe for Provence, and, notwithstanding the present splendours of sunshine, flowers were backward. Jonquils and violets alone strewed the floors of the scent-makers. They must wait still for the bushels of roses, whose labyrinthine budding had not begun.

On the left-hand side of the Maganosc road there was one place that Miradou had often paused at, just before the road along the hill-side made for the very depths of the ravine and then turned sharply, outwards again, towards the long village with its styleless church but quaint campanile — towards the vast olive gardens that sloped to the plain. There was an iron gate, high, elegant, and dignified, as of some old-world villa, and, within and behind it, a gravelled way, too broad for a footpath, yet now, by the great inroad of untended shrubs, too narrow for a carriage drive. Quickly the way curved a little — enough to prevent its further course from being seen from gate or

[1] The right to draw water from the springs at the hillside belongs to each olive-farmer for short and fixed periods. Hence the necessity of storage in those fields which are flower gardens.

high road. Unrestrained foliage of darker and of lighter green — some of the trees perhaps sun-smitten and some in shadow — made of the place a tangle and a mystery. You only guessed. Above the mass of greenery there rose just here at hand, by the very roadside, the grace of the eucalyptus — a shimmer of silver — and from some unreached recess the top of a sombre cypress lifted itself against the background of thickly clothed hillside. Had there once been a villa there? — Miradou had wondered — was it now dismantled and done with? Or were the stately gate and the curved road and that particular garden but a secondary and now disused entrance to some greater property by the side of the hills? Not many steps along the drive, just within sight from the gate, stood, on a space of overgrown and neglected grass, a stone pedestal, like the base of a statue. In past years had some Diana, with her arrows, paused on the stone, a foot still lifted, but her chase suddenly stopped; or was there a lyre there, and Apollo; or had some slim figure of Silence put finger on lip in that enclosed place, wherein for long, amidst the wayward greenery, no step of man had stirred?

It was Miradou's garden — in her imagination long her very own.

At night, Orgeas thought of it — fancied it all, from the excluding gate on to the statue's pedestal, and pictured every branch of every tree. There must be Miradou walking. And at night, when the breeze stirred, the eucalyptus boughs would sway in the darkness, and the sombre cypress perhaps would have a gesture, a bend to right and to left, as the tempered wind passed over it and was gone.

And now on the eighth day it was almost the dawn. Had Miradou left her garden as the daylight came to it? And the child was wandering — where?

An hour later, Orgeas looked out of his window. But the early morning sunlight, that was accustomed — all these recent times of the belated Spring — to make upon house front and shutter its shifting pattern of cool gold, was not visible at all. Clouds that were tangible mist drifted over the mountains — seemed for a time to have a substance solid almost as the earth's; as measurable, as closely defined. Then there were heavy raindrops, and then a pelting of waters. The distance was clean gone, and suddenly

the narrowed world of street and house-front was one uniform slate colour.

Again, that eighth morning, Orgeas trudged to his work. By midday there was sunshine. Where was Miradou? Seeking shelter from its white flash and blinding glare in the deep shadow and coolness of some always opened church — the Cathedral perhaps, or the Oratoire, or St. Thomas in the lane — the Sœurs de St. Thomas had taught Miradou, in their school, next door.

Most likely the Cathedral. Behind the altar, there, by the benches where the choristers practise, where the little organ is — the great one's deputy, in the western gallery. Yes; the Cathedral. She had her favourite picture there; she looked at it at Vespers; at Benediction it spoke to her. Not Fragonard's famous "Feet Washing," which a chandelier obscured; but Subleyras's "Assumption," with its touch of modernness and of the actual world — its observant crowd of Apostles who were *gens du monde* somehow; its Virgin, a very pleasant, well-bred Frenchwoman you might meet in Grasse to-day, though dressed a little differently. That was so homely. Painted so, you could understand it, quite.

Or now — thought Orgeas, absent-minded, at his work — and silent, with no smile for any comrade, for the ninth day was drawing near, and his anxiety increased — now that it was afternoon, and the shadows were long and the ways cooler on the road to Auribeau, the downward road to the plain — now that it was that hour, was Miradou there, stepping past the rose gardens, past the orchards starred with the white of cherry blossom or flushed with *rose-du-Barry* bloom of some early peach tree — a splash of colour thrown wantonly amidst the green and the gray — past the lowland meadows from amidst whose ampler herbage the chapel of Our Lady of Valcluse lifts itself, screened by trees? Did Miradou stop? Scarcely. Only twice in the year would anybody dream of entering the deserted chapel, pilgrim-crowded on its particular fête-day. She had come on to Auribeau, the massed village, perched on the pointed hill — gone on along the rising road past the cork trees that overlooked the bend of the river: the Siagne, limpid, green as a lake, lying deep in the ravine of the shadowed hills. There! was Miradou there? But when would she return again, and the little house welcome

her, and the heart that was hers so wholly leap again for joy?

She was on no far-away journey. Distant Auribeau, more distant Gourdon — they had not seen her to-day. She was nearing home now. Very close. She was waiting — was biding her time.

He knew it — Orgeas knew it. She was in their town to-night. On the Cours, by the terrace, or in the patch of city garden, by Fragonard's bust, or higher up, by the Provençal poet's — by Bellaud de la Bellaudière's. The lovers on the seat there, by the trees, in the darkness — as she passed, were they conscious of the ghost of her form? At least they were happier. She carried happiness as a garment. They were more joyful, or were more at rest — those lovers — never guessing the cause. For Miradou was there. She had passed, had turned, had paused. Very near was Miradou. Now perhaps under his own dark house-front, under the home of Orgeas: her step unrecognized only because it was silent; but surely there, amidst the clattering steps of the living.

The next was the ninth day.

After a night in which he had slept but

little, Orgeas had risen early, and, having hurried his clothes on, had thrown wide the shutters, and into the dark chambers there streamed the morning. The day before, he had given out, at the printing press, that that day they were not to expect him; he could not work that day, for that day she would come. Would it be possible, he had asked himself, before deciding it so, to fulfil his tasks as usual at each accustomed hour, and then, at nightfall only, to walk home, and a minute to settle it — there or not there; come back and tired of wandering, or back no more for ever, and dead indeed? That crisis was unendurable — to stake all in a minute, as it were, upon the hazard of the die; the division between hope and fear, narrowed, refined, to a pin's point. It was not in Humanity to bear it thus, with such a suddenness of knowledge. He would walk himself — and walk until he was done for. In the morning he would walk; in the afternoon, would wait.

So Orgeas made his way, that ninth morning, along the very road whose every turn, when thinking of Miradou, he had most completely realised. It was the road to Maganosc, the road past her garden. He

tramped along by the two forges, by the great coach-house, the hotel, and the Baronne's villa, and the English Church, and the Octroi, and the turning to Malbosc. He was well on the road to Maganosc now; soon, the turn inwards, the railing and the wrought-iron gate and Miradou's garden; the eucalyptus no breeze stirred, in the sudden radiant summer; the stiffened cactus, silvery gray; the magnolia; the cypress black; and, as he peered upwards, far above it, trees climbing the hillside, till at last, amongst limestone crags, only the pines held their own. The Summer was come, to welcome Miradou back; the overflowing ardours of the sun announced to Orgeas the new season; and in the stainless daylight and the subtle air his hope was made a confidence. He walked, he almost sprang, up a steep olive-ground, and reached from it — and paced an hour — a level mule path, the country's ancient way. And from the mule path, through a mist of olive leaves, there was the warm and golden plain, and deep blue shadows of the Esterel, and leagues of distant water gleaming silvery in the fortunate day.

Coming down again, he talked to a peas-

ant, and picked some flowers for Miradou, under the shade of the olives.

It was time to go homewards, now — fully time. One o'clock struck from Maganosc tower. It would be the beginning of the afternoon when he should arrive and be ready for her — his feet hurrying up the staircase, to her rooms in the narrow street: to Miradou's home.

She was not there yet, however. He found that when he got there. Of course not yet. But a little later. Orgeas sat in expectation. There was much to think about; so much there would be to say to her. The time would pass, not very slowly. And she would soon come.

"*Bien sûr*," he said to himself, with the phrase of days ago — the phrase with which the lonely man had comforted the earliest hours of his threatened loss — "*Bien sûr, elle reviendra! . . . O! pour sûr!*"

He sat brooding, waiting. She must come before the sunset of that ninth, decisive day. Yes, it would have to be before the sunset. Sunset fixed it. That he knew.

But the sun was high yet — was it not? It was well above the circle of the hills. He looked out of the window, and in the street

he noticed where a certain shadow fell. He came back, and sat down. He rose again, and wandered in and out of Miradou's room that was just as she left it; and sat again; and wandered. And then he went to his window, and out of it he leaned, and looked again for the shadow. How much longer the shadow! Yet, of course, there was time.

Orgeas was seated awhile, once more, in his own chair, in his particular corner. Facing it was Miradou's chair, and by Miradou's chair, her footstool. On the table stood the flowers he had brought for her. On the mantelpiece there was left, still — why of course there was left, still — a bit of her work. From her chair she had but to lift her hand and could take her work. That very night she would take her work. She was coming, now, to take it.

Surely it was not so light now, in the room, as it had been. No; it was not so light. Orgeas knew that. The light seemed creeping away.

The silvery sound of a church bell, musical, soothing, struck him next. But it was Vespers. Was it, though, quite so late? Yes, it was Vespers — Vespers at the Cathedral. Well? Miradou must be there.

She would be coming now. Certainly now. She was on the stairs, now.

Pale and the ghost of himself, for all his sustained trusting, Orgeas waited for her who was wandering ghost no more. A woman again; his child; his hand could press her. Her head was against his head. He held her wrist; feeling the throb of her pulses. The long, the long suspense was all but over. Miradou would be here.

It was getting darker now. It was much, much darker. Was there any colour in the flowers? And Miradou's print gown, that hung on a peg by the window—it was the child's red gown, remember—What was the colour of Miradou's red gown? Had the curtain any colour?

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ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH *was born at Liverpool, January 1, 1819, and died in Florence, November 13, 1861.*[1] *As the subject of the third supremely great lament in English literature,*[2] *— the* Thyrsis *of Matthew Arnold, — one is naturally impressed by a personality so unique. What, we ask, was the sufficient virtue that could compel a poet, unused to displays of barren grief, to yield up this high elegiac strain?*

"Some life of men unblest
He knew, which made him droop, and fill'd his head.
He went; his piping took a troubled sound
Of storms that rage outside our happy ground;
He could not wait their passing, he is dead."

Lines such as these do much towards explaining the fascination that a character like Clough's, (touched as it was with a

---

1 *His* Poems and Prose Remains with a Selection from his Letters and a Memoir edited by his wife, *were first collected with the assistance of J. A. Symonds, 2 vols. octavo. London, 1869. Selections from his Poems have also appeared in the Golden Treasury Series (where* The Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich *is reprinted entire). Fcap 8vo. London, 1894.*

2 *See Foreword to* The Bibelot, *Vol. III, pp. 315, 316.*

Wordsworthian sense of moving about in worlds unrealized,) would have for his greater brother in letters. Both were seekers after that something not found Here, or perhaps Elsewhere, "in any satisfying measure."

For Clough's longer poems we have felt slight interest; even The Bothie, *and his later* Amours de Voyage *are, or so they seem, but the inevitable failures resulting from employment of the English hexameter. Concerning* Dipsychus *and much else, whatever its value as experimental* jeu d'esprit, *it assuredly has slight poetic claim upon readers familiar with the more brilliantly executed cynicisms of To-day.*

No, not *in these things; but, taking as an exquisite introduction Arnold's threnody, let us, and all who would come to love Clough, turn to his* Songs in Absence, *his* Easter Day, *or, loveliest of all, his* 'Ite Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus.' *Here the Scholar Gipsy speaks to us; here, indeed, as of old, we discover Thyrsis.*

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Servant, cease thy labour;
Thou hast borne thy burden;
Thou hast done thy task!
. . . . .
While the huge moon rises,
And the large white planets
Wheel and glow above thee,
Till the cottage tapers,
Swallowed by the darkness,
Leave no human symbol
Underneath the sky.
Sleep a dreamless slumber,
For thine eyes shall never
See the gates of morning
Lift their awful shadows,
Nor the gold and amber
Of the heavenly dayspring
Sparkle on the heather
Of the purple moorland.

Thou shalt wake no more!

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"It may be said of Clough, as Carlyle said of Sterling, that he was 'a remarkable soul, ... who, more than others, sensible to its influences, took intensely into him such tint and shape of feature as the world had to offer there and then; fashioning himself eagerly by whatsoever of noble presented itself.' It may be said of him, likewise, that in his writings and actions 'there is for all true hearts, and especially for young noble seekers, and strivers towards what is highest, a mirror in which some shadow of themselves and of their immeasurably complex arena will profitably present itself. Here also is one encompassed and struggling even as they now are.'"

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'So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
We see thee as thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.'"

(*Memoir prefixed to the Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough. 1869.*)

I.

FAREWELL, farewell! Her vans the vessel tries,
His iron might the potent engine plies:
Haste, winged words, and ere 'tis useless, tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.

The docks, the streets, the houses past us fly,
Without a strain the great ship marches by;
Ye fleeting banks take up the words we tell,
And say for us yet once again, farewell.

The waters widen — on without a strain
The strong ship moves upon the open main;
She knows the seas, she hears the true waves swell,
She seems to say farewell, again farewell.

The billows whiten and the deep seas heave;
Fly once again, sweet words, to her I leave,
With winds that blow return, and seas that swell,
Farewell, farewell, say once again, farewell.

Fresh in my face and rippling to my feet
The winds and waves an answer soft repeat,
In sweet, sweet words far brought they seem to tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.

Night gathers fast; adieu, thou fading shore!
The land we look for next must lie before;
Hence, foolish tears! weak thoughts, no more rebel,
Farewell, farewell, a last, a last farewell.

Yet not, indeed, ah not till more than sea
And more than space divide my love and me,
Till more than waves and winds between us swell,
Farewell, a last, indeed, a last farewell.

II.

COME home, come home! and where is home for me,
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless sea?
To the frail bark here plunging on its way,
To the wild waters, shall I turn and say
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea foam,
You are my home.

Fields once I walked in, faces once I knew,
Familiar things so old my heart believed them true,
These far, far back, behind me lie, before
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep seas roar,
And speak to them that 'neath and o'er them roam
No words of home.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves that roar,
There may indeed, or may not be, a shore,
Where fields as green, and hands and hearts as true,
The old forgotten semblance may renew,
And offer exiles driven far o'er the salt sea foam
Another home.

But toil and pain must wear out many a day,
And days bear weeks, and weeks bear months away,
Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,
With accents whispered in his wayworn ear,
A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come
To thy true home.

Come home, come home! and where a home hath he
Whose ship is driving o'er the driving sea?
Through clouds that mutter, and o'er waves that roar,
Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a shore
That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,
Indeed our home?

III.

COME back, come back, behold with straining mast
And swelling sail, behold her steaming fast;
With one new sun to see her voyage o'er,
With morning light to touch her native shore.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, while westward labouring by,
With sailless yards, a bare black hulk we fly.
See how the gale we fight with sweeps her back,
To our lost home, on our forsaken track.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, across the flying foam,
We hear faint far-off voices call us home,
Come back, ye seem to say; ye seek in vain;
We went, we sought, and homeward turned again.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; and whither back or why?
To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes to try;
Walk the old fields; pace the familiar street;
Dream with the idlers, with the bards compete.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; and whither and for what?
To finger idly some old Gordian knot,

Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to cleave,
And with much toil attain to half-believe.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; yea back, indeed, do go
Sighs panting thick, and tears that want to flow;
Fond fluttering hopes upraise their useless wings,
And wishes idly struggle in the strings;
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, more eager than the breeze,
The flying fancies sweep across the seas,
And lighter far than ocean's flying foam,
The heart's fond message hurries to its home.
Come back, come back!

Come back, come back!
Back flies the foam; the hoisted flag streams back;
The long smoke wavers on the homeward track,
Back fly with winds things which the winds obey,
The strong ship follows its appointed way.

IV.

SOME future day when what is now is not,
When all old faults and follies are forgot,
And thoughts of difference passed like dreams away,
We'll meet again, upon some future day.

When all that hindered, all that vexed our love,
As tall rank weeds will climb the blade above,
When all but it has yielded to decay,
We'll meet again upon some future day.

When we have proved, each on his course alone,
The wider world, and learnt what's now unknown,
Have made life clear, and worked out each a way,
We'll meet again, — we shall have much to say.

With happier mood, and feelings born anew,
Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll review,
Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to play,
And meet again, on many a future day.

Some day, which oft our hearts shall yearn to see,
In some far year, though distant yet to be,
Shall we indeed, — ye winds and waters, say! —
Meet yet again, upon some future day?

V.

WHERE lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westers rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

EASTER DAY.

NAPLES, 1849.

THROUGH the great sinful streets of Naples as I past,
With fiercer heat than flamed above my head
My heart was hot within me; till at last
My brain was lightened when my tongue had said —
Christ is not risen!

Christ is not risen, no —
He lies and moulders low;
Christ is not risen!

What though the stone were rolled away, and though
The grave found empty there? —
If not there, then elsewhere;
If not where Joseph laid Him first, why then
Where other men
Translaid Him after, in some humbler clay.
Long ere to-day
Corruption that sad perfect work hath done,
Which here she scarcely, lightly had begun:
The foul engendered worm
Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving form
Of our most Holy and Anointed One.
He is not risen, no —
He lies and moulders low;
Christ is not risen!

What if the women, ere the dawn was grey,
Saw one or more great angels, as they say
(Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither there, nor then,
Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at all,
Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten;
Nor, save in thunderous terror, to blind Saul;
Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,
He is not risen, indeed,—
Christ is not risen!

Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten
Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet again?
What if at Emmaüs inn, and by Capernaum's Lake,
Came One, the bread that brake—
Came One that spake as never mortal spake,
And with them ate, and drank, and stood, and walked about?
Ah! 'some' did well to 'doubt!'
Ah! the true Christ, while these things came to pass,
Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor lived, alas!
He was not risen, no—
He lay and mouldered low,
Christ was not risen!

As circulates in some great city crowd
A rumour changeful, vague, importunate, and loud,
From no determined centre, or of fact
Or authorship exact,
Which no man can deny
Nor verify;

So spread the wondrous fame;
He all the same
Lay senseless, mouldering, low:
He was not risen, no—
Christ was not risen!

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One, too!
This is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen!

Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?
Oh, we unwise!
What did we dream, what wake we to discover?
Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains, cover!
In darkness and great gloom
Come ere we thought it is *our* day of doom;
From the cursed world, which is one tomb,
Christ is not risen!

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this is bliss:
There is no heaven but this;
There is no hell,
Save earth, which serves the purpose doubly well,
Seeing it visits still
With equalest apportionment of ill
Both good and bad alike, and brings to one same dust
The unjust and the just
With Christ, who is not risen.

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls bereaved:
Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope
We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,
And most beliefless, that had most believed.
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
As of the unjust, also of the just —
Yea, of that Just One too!
It is the one sad Gospel that is true —
Christ is not risen!

Weep not beside the tomb,
Ye women, unto whom
He was great solace while ye tended Him;
Ye who with napkin o'er the head
And folds of linen round each wounded limb
Laid out the Sacred Dead;
And thou that bar'st Him in thy wondering womb;
Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,
Bind up as best ye may your own sad bleeding heart:
Go to your homes, your living children tend,
Your earthly spouses love;
Set your affections *not* on things above,
Which moth and rust corrupt, which quickliest come to end:
Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if pray ye can,
For death; since dead is He whom ye deemed more than man,
Who is not risen: no —
But lies and moulders low —
Who is not risen!

Ye men of Galilee!
Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where Him ye ne'er may see,
Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again?
Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!
Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,
And catch not men, but fish;
Whate'er things ye might wish,
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall meet with more.
Ye poor deluded youths, go home,
Mend the old nets ye left to roam,
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail:
It was indeed an 'idle tale'—
He was not risen!

And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,
Who shall believe *because* ye did not see—
Oh, be ye warned, be wise!
No more with pleading eyes,
And sobs of strong desire,
Unto the empty vacant void aspire,
Seeking another and impossible birth
That is not of your own, and only mother earth.
But if there is no other life for you,
Sit down and be content, since this must even do:
He is not risen.

One look, and then depart,
Ye humble and ye holy men of heart;
And ye! ye ministers and stewards of a Word

Which ye would preach, because another heard —
Ye worshippers of that ye do not know,
Take these things hence and go: —
He is not risen!

Here, on our Easter Day
We rise, we come, and lo! we find Him not,
Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot:
Where they have laid Him there is none to say;
No sound, nor in, nor out — no word
Or where to seek the dead or meet the living Lord.
There is no glistering of an angel's wings
There is no voice of heavenly clear behest:
Let us go hence, and think upon these things
In silence, which is best.
Is He not risen? No —
But lies and moulders low?
Christ is not risen?

II.

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone,
I with my secret self held communing of mine own.
So in the southern city spake the tongue
Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,
But in a later hour I sat and heard
Another voice that spake — another graver word.
Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been said,
Though He be dead, He is not dead.
In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.

Weep not beside His tomb,
Ye women unto whom
He was great comfort and yet greater grief;
Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with Him to roam,
Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go hopeless to your home;
Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of their belief;
Though He be dead, He is not dead,
Nor gone, though fled,
Not lost, though vanished;
Though He return not, though
He lies and moulders low;
In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.

Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,
Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly look around.
Whate'er befel,
Earth is not hell;
Now, too, as when it first began,
Life is yet life, and man is man.
For all that breathe beneath the heaven's high cope,
Joy with grief mixes, with despondence hope.
Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief;
Or at least, faith unbelief.
Though dead, not dead;
Not gone, though fled;
Not lost, though vanished.
In the great gospel and true creed,
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS.

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence, joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered —
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides —
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze! and O great seas,
  Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
  Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
  One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
  At last, at last, unite them there!

'WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLENESS, NEITHER SHADOW OF TURNING.'

It fortifies my soul to know
  That, though I perish, Truth is so:
That, howsoe'er I stray and range,
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall.

THE STREAM OF LIFE.

O STREAM descending to the sea,
Thy mossy banks between,
The flow'rets blow, the grasses grow,
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,
The fields the labourers till,
And houses stand on either hand,
And thou descendest still.

O life descending into death,
Our waking eyes behold,
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,
Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our mind possess,
Our hearts affections fill,
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,
And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,
Inevitable sea,
To which we flow, what do we know,
What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,
As we our course fulfil;
Scarce we divine a sun will shine
And be above us still.

ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS.

THE skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
The rainy clouds are filing fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year agone,
Who stepped beside and cheered us on and on?
My sweetheart wanders far away from me,
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And through the vale the rains go sweeping by;
Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie).
And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to mind
The pleasant huts and herds he left behind?
And doth he sometimes in his slumbering see
The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,
My sweetheart wandering wheresoe'er it be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And loud and louder roars the flood below,
Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be:
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Or shall he find before his term be sped,
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to wed?
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.)
For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles away.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he returning see himself too late?
For work we must, and what we see, we see,
And God he knows, and what must be, must be,
When sweethearts wander far away from me.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The sky behind is brightening up anew
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
The rain is ending, and our journey too;
Heigho! aha! for here at home are we:—
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH.

SAY not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

COME, POET, COME!

COME, Poet, come!
A thousand labourers ply their task,
And what it tends to scarcely ask,
And trembling thinkers on the brink
Shiver, and know not how to think.
To tell the purport of their pain,
And what our silly joys contain;
In lasting lineaments pourtray
The substance of a shadowy day;
Our real and inner deeds rehearse,
And make our meaning clear in verse:
Come, Poet, come! for but in vain
We do the work or feel the pain,
And gather up the seeming gain,
Unless before the end thou come
To take, ere they are lost, their sum.

Come, Poet, come!
To give an utterance to the dumb,
And make vain babblers silent, come;
A thousand dupes point here and there,
Bewildered by the show and glare;
And wise men half have learned to doubt
Whether we are not best without.
Come, Poet; both but wait to see
Their error proved to them in thee.

Come, Poet, come!
In vain I seem to call. And yet
Think not the living times forget.
Ages of heroes fought and fell
That Homer in the end might tell;
O'er grovelling generations past
Upstood the Doric fane at last;
And countless hearts on countless years
Had wasted thoughts, and hopes, and fears,
Rude laughter and unmeaning tears;
Ere England Shakespeare saw, or Rome
The pure perfection of her dome.
Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see;
Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead had sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.

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WHEN one considers the exquisitely fashioned essay from which these translations are taken it seems a hardship, almost, not to reprint the text entire.[1] *The artistic development of the legend is necessarily omitted. Our space limitation, however, is not wholly loss — rendering more widely accessible what might else remain too little sought after, save by specialists.*[2]

As in his version of Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche, so, had Pater lived, we might have come to possess a few more translations in the marvelous prose which died with him. This attitude of restraint toward his work, — the few things done with loving deliberation, — the attitude of

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1 "The Myth of Demeter and Persephone" *was originally written and delivered as two lectures in 1875. It was first printed in the* Fortnightly Review *for January and February, 1876. It next appeared in* Greek Studies, *edited by Mr. Charles L. Shadwell (London, 1895).*

2 *Compare for later poetic versions of the myth: Swinburne's* At Eleusis, Hymn to Proserpine, *and* The Garden of Proserpine; *Tennyson's* Demeter and Persephone; *George Meredith's* The Day of the Daughter of Hades, *and* The Appeasement of Demeter.

the artist everywhere and at all times,— has been well set forth by his friend and editor, Mr. Shadwell:

"That delicacy of insight, that gift of penetrating into the heart of things, that subtleness of interpretation which with him seems an instinct, was the outcome of hard, patient, conscientious study. If he had chosen he might, without difficulty, have produced a far greater body of work of less value; and from a worldly point of view, he would have been wise. Such was not his understanding of the use of his talents."

We are now to meet Walter Pater not as the interpreter of the Renaissance, but as one who has concerned himself with Eleusinian mysteries — as expositor of that magic in poetry and art inseparable from the "Violet Land," — as translator of a supreme episode in its mythic cycle, the ravishment of the daughter of Demeter; she who thenceforth became queen of

"The dim land where all things are forgot."

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"For, lo, the Great Mother, She!
And Callistes gazed, he gave
His eyeballs up to the sight:
The embrace of the Twain, of whom
To men are their day, their night,
Mellow fruits and the shearing tomb:
Our Lady of the Sheaves
And the Lily of Hades, the Sweet
Of Enna: he saw through leaves
The Mother and Daughter meet.
They stood by the chariot-wheel,
Embraced, very tall, most like
Fellow poplars, wind-taken, that reel
Down their shivering columns and strike
Head to head, crossing throats: and apart,
For the feast of the look, they drew,
Which Darkness no longer could thwart;
And they broke together anew,
Exulting to tears, flower and bud.
But the mate of the Rayless was grave:
She smiled like Sleep on its flood,
That washes of all we crave:
Like the trance of eyes awake
And the spirit ensbrouded, she cast
The wan underworld on the lake.
They were so, and they passed.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

"THE 'worship of sorrow,' as Goethe called it, is sometimes supposed to have had almost no place in the religion of the Greeks. Their religion has been represented as a religion of mere cheerfulness, the worship by an untroubled, unreflecting humanity, conscious of no deeper needs, of the embodiments of its own joyous activity. It helped to hide out of their sight those traces of decay and weariness, of which the Greeks were constitutionally shy, to keep them from peeping too curiously into certain shadowy places, appropriate enough to the gloomy imagination of the middle age; and it hardly proposed to itself to give consolation to people who, in truth, were never 'sick or sorry.' In effect, such a conception of Greek art and poetry leaves in the central expressions of Greek culture none but negative qualities; and the legend of Demeter and Persephone, perhaps the most popular of all Greek legends, is sufficient to show that the 'worship of sorrow' was not without its function in Greek religion; their legend is a legend made by and for sorrowful, wistful, anxious people; while the most important artistic monuments of that legend sufficiently prove that the Romantic spirit was really at work in the minds of Greek artists, extracting by a kind of subtle alchemy, a beauty, not without the elements of tranquillity, of dignity and order, out of a matter, at first sight painful and strange."

WALTER PATER.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

THREE TRANSLATIONS.

I.

The Song of Demeter.

No chapter in the history of human imagination is more curious than the myth of Demeter, and Kore or Persephone. Alien in some respects from the genuine traditions of Greek mythology, a relic of the *earlier* inhabitants of Greece, and having but a subordinate place in the religion of Homer, it yet asserted its interest, little by little, and took a complex hold on the minds of the Greeks, becoming finally the central and most popular subject of their national worship. Following its changes, we come across various phases of Greek culture, which are not without their likenesses in the modern mind. We trace it in the dim first period of instinctive popular conception; we see it connecting itself with many impressive elements of art, and poetry, and religious custom, with the picturesque superstitions of the many, and with the finer intuitions of the few; and besides this, it is in itself full of interest and suggestion, to all for whom the ideas of the Greek religion have any real

meaning in the modern world. And the fortune of the myth has not deserted it in later times. In the year 1780, the long-lost text of the Homeric Hymn to Demeter was discovered among the manuscripts of the imperial library at Moscow; and, in our own generation, the tact of an eminent student of Greek art, Sir Charles Newton, has restored to the world the buried treasures of the little temple and precinct of Demeter, at Cnidus, which have many claims to rank in the central order of Greek sculpture. The present essay is an attempt to select and weave together, for those who are now approaching the deeper study of Greek thought, whatever details in the development of this myth, arranged with a view rather to a total impression than to the debate of particular points, may seem likely to increase their stock of poetical impressions, and to add to this some criticisms on the expression which it has left of itself in extant art and poetry.

The central expression, then, of the story of Demeter and Persephone is the Homeric hymn, to which Grote has assigned a date at least as early as six hundred years before

Christ. The one survivor of a whole family of hymns on this subject, it was written, perhaps, for one of those contests which took place on the seventh day of the Eleusinian festival, and in which a bunch of ears of corn was the prize; perhaps, for actual use in the mysteries themselves, by the *Hierophantes*, or Interpreter, who showed to the worshippers at Eleusis those sacred places to which the poem contains so many references. About the composition itself there are many difficult questions, with various surmises as to why it has remained only in this unique manuscript of the end of the fourteenth century. Portions of the text are missing, and there are probably some additions by later hands; yet most scholars have admitted that it possesses some of the true characteristics of the Homeric style, some genuine echoes of the age immediately succeeding that which produced the Iliad and the Odyssey. Listen now to a somewhat abbreviated version of it.

"*I begin the song of Demeter*"—says the prize-poet, or the Interpreter, the Sacristan of the holy places—"*the song of Demeter and her daughter Persephone, whom Aidoneus*

carried away by the consent of Zeus, as she played, apart from her mother, with the deep-bosomed daughters of the Ocean, gathering flowers in a meadow of soft grass—roses and the crocus and fair violets and flags, and hyacinths, and, above all, the strange flower of the narcissus, which the Earth, favouring the desire of Aidoneus, brought forth for the first time, to snare the footsteps of the flower-like girl. A hundred heads of blossom grew up from the roots of it, and the sky and the earth and the salt wave of the sea were glad at the scent thereof. She stretched forth her hands to take the flower; thereupon the earth opened, and the king of the great nation of the dead sprang out with his immortal horses. He seized the unwilling girl, and bore her away weeping, on his golden chariot. She uttered a shrill cry, calling upon her father Zeus; but neither man nor god heard her voice, nor even the nymphs of the meadow where she played; except Hecate only, the daughter of Persæus, sitting, as ever, in her cave, half veiled with a shining veil, thinking delicate thoughts; she, and the Sun also, heard her.

"So long as she could still see the earth, and the sky, and the sea with the great waves

moving, and the beams of the sun, and still thought to see again her mother, and the race of the ever-living gods, so long hope soothed her, in the midst of her grief. The peaks of the hills and the depths of the sea echoed her cry. And the mother heard it. A sharp pain seized her at the heart; she plucked the veil from her hair, and cast down the blue hood from her shoulders, and fled forth like a bird, seeking Persephone over dry land and sea. But neither man nor god would tell her the truth; nor did any bird come to her as a sure messenger.

"Nine days she wandered up and down upon the earth, having blazing torches in her hands; and, in her great sorrow, she refused to taste of ambrosia, or of the cup of the sweet nectar, nor washed her face. But when the tenth morning came, Hecate met her, having a light in her hands. But Hecate had heard the voice only, and had seen no one, and could not tell Demeter who had borne the girl away. And Demeter said not a word, but fled away swiftly with her, having the blazing torches in her hands, till they came to the Sun, the watchman both of gods and men; and the goddess questioned him, and the Sun told her the whole story.

" Then a more terrible grief took possession of Demeter, and, in her anger against Zeus, she forsook the assembly of the gods and abode among men, for a long time veiling her beauty under a worn countenance, so that none who looked upon her knew her, until she came to the house of Celeus, who was then king of Eleusis. In her sorrow, she sat down at the wayside by the virgin's well, where the people of Eleusis come to draw water, under the shadow of an olive-tree. She seemed as an aged woman whose time of child-bearing is gone by, and from whom the gifts of Aphrodite have been withdrawn, like one of the hired servants, who nurse the children or keep house, in kings' palaces. And the daughters of Celeus, four of them, like goddesses, possessing the flower of their youth, Callidice, Cleisidice, Demo, and Callithoe the eldest of them, coming to draw water that they might bear it in their brazen pitchers to their father's house, saw Demeter and knew her not. The gods are hard for men to recognise.

" They asked her kindly what she did there, alone; and Demeter answered, dissemblingly, that she was escaped from certain pirates, who had carried her from her home and meant to

sell her as a slave. Then they prayed her to abide there while they returned to the palace, to ask their mother's permission to bring her home.

"Demeter bowed her head in assent; and they, having filled their shining vessels with water, bore them away, rejoicing in their beauty. They came quickly to their father's house, and told their mother what they had seen and heard. Their mother bade them return, and hire the woman for a great price; and they, like the hinds or young heifers leaping in the fields in spring, fulfilled with the pasture, holding up the folds of their raiment, sped along the hollow road-way, their hair, in colour like the crocus, floating about their shoulders as they went. They found the glorious goddess still sitting by the wayside, unmoved. Then they led her to their father's house; and she, veiled from head to foot, in her deep grief, followed them on the way, and her blue robe gathered itself as she walked, in many folds about her feet. They came to the house, and passed through the sunny porch, where their mother, Metaneira, was sitting against one of the pillars of the roof, having a young child in her bosom. They ran up to her; but Demeter crossed the threshold,

and, as she passed through, her head rose and touched the roof, and her presence filled the doorway with a divine brightness.

"Still they did not wholly recognise her. After a time she was made to smile. She refused to drink wine, but tasted of a cup mingled of water and barley, flavoured with mint. It happened that Metaneira had lately borne a child. It had come beyond hope, long after its elder brethren, and was the object of a peculiar tenderness and of many prayers with all. Demeter consented to remain, and become the nurse of this child. She took the child in her immortal hands, and placed it in her fragrant bosom; and the heart of the mother rejoiced. Thus Demeter nursed Demophoon. And the child grew like a god, neither sucking the breast, nor eating bread; but Demeter daily anointed it with ambrosia, as if it had indeed been the child of a god, breathing sweetly over it and holding it in her bosom; and at nights, when she lay alone with the child, she would hide it secretly in the red strength of the fire, like a brand; for her heart yearned towards it, and she would fain have given to it immortal youth.

"But the foolishness of his mother prevented

it. For a suspicion growing up within her, she awaited her time, and one night peeped in upon them, and thereupon cried out in terror at what she saw. And the goddess heard her; and a sudden anger seizing her, she plucked the child from the fire and cast it on the ground,—the child she would fain have made immortal, but who must now share the common destiny of all men, though some inscrutable grace should still be his, because he had lain for awhile on the knees and in the bosom of the goddess.

"Then Demeter manifested herself openly. She put away the mask of old age, and changed her form, and the spirit of beauty breathed about her. A fragrant odour fell from her raiment, and her flesh shone from afar; the long yellow hair descended waving over her shoulders, and the great house was filled as with the brightness of lightning. She passed out through the halls; and Metaneira fell to the earth, and was speechless for a long time, and remembered not to lift the child from the ground. But the sisters, hearing its piteous cries, leapt from their beds and ran to it. Then one of them lifted the child from the earth, and wrapped it in her bosom, and another hastened to her mother's chamber to awake her:

they came round the child, and washed away the flecks of the fire from its panting body, and kissed it tenderly all about: but the anguish of the child ceased not; the arms of other and different nurses were about to enfold it.

"So, all night, trembling with fear, they sought to propitiate the glorious goddess; and in the morning they told all to their father, Celeus. And he, according to the commands of the goddess, built a fair temple; and all the people assisted; and when it was finished every man departed to his own home. Then Demeter returned, and sat down within the temple-walls, and remained still apart from the company of the gods, alone in her wasting regret for her daughter Persephone.

"And, in her anger, she sent upon the earth a year of grievous famine. The dry seed remained hidden in the soil; in vain the oxen drew the ploughshare through the furrows; much white seed-corn fell fruitless on the earth, and the whole human race had like to have perished, and the gods had no more service of men, unless Zeus had interfered. First he sent Iris, afterwards all the gods, one by one, to turn Demeter from her anger; but none was able to persuade her; she heard their words

with a hard countenance, and vowed by no means to return to Olympus, nor to yield the fruit of the earth, until her eyes had seen her lost daughter again. Then, last of all, Zeus sent Hermes into the kingdom of the dead, to persuade Aidoneus to suffer his bride to return to the light of day. And Hermes found the king at home in his palace, sitting on a couch, beside the shrinking Persephone, consumed within herself by desire for her mother. A doubtful smile passed over the face of Aidoneus; yet he obeyed the message, and bade Persephone return; yet praying her a little to have gentle thoughts of him, nor judge him too hardly, who was also an immortal god. And Persephone arose up quickly in great joy; only, ere she departed, he caused her to eat a morsel of sweet pomegranate, designing secretly thereby, that she should not remain always upon earth, but might some time return to him. And Aidoneus yoked the horses to his chariot; and Persephone ascended into it; and Hermes took the reins in his hands and drove out through the infernal halls; and the horses ran willingly; and they two quickly passed over the ways of that long journey, neither the waters of the sea, nor of the rivers, nor the deep ravines of the hills, nor

the cliffs of the shore, resisting them; till at last Hermes placed Persephone before the door of the temple where her mother was; who, seeing her, ran out quickly to meet her, like a Mænad coming down a mountain-side, dusky with woods.

"So they spent all that day together in intimate communion, having many things to hear and tell. Then Zeus sent to them Rhea, his venerable mother, the oldest of divine persons, to bring them back reconciled, to the company of the gods; and he ordained that Persephone should remain two parts of the year with her mother, and one third part only with her husband, in the kingdom of the dead. So Demeter suffered the earth to yield its fruits once more, and the land was suddenly laden with leaves and flowers and waving corn. Also she visited Triptolemus and the other princes of Eleusis, and instructed them in the performance of her sacred rites,—those mysteries of which no tongue may speak. Only, blessed is he whose eyes have seen them; his lot after death is not as the lot of other men!"

II.

Episode from Claudian's The Rape of Proserpine.

The poem of Claudian on the *Rape of Proserpine*, the longest extant work connected with the story of Demeter, yet itself unfinished, closes the world of classical poetry. Writing in the fourth century of the Christian era, Claudian has his subject before him in the whole extent of its various development, and also profits by those many pictorial representations of it, which, from the famous picture of Polygnotus downwards, delighted the ancient world. His poem, then, besides having an intrinsic charm, is valuable for some reflexion in it of those lost works, being itself pre-eminently a work in colour, and excelling in a kind of painting in words, which brings its subject very pleasantly almost to the eye of the reader. The mind of this late votary of the old gods, in a world rapidly changing, is crowded with all the beautiful forms generated by mythology, and now about to be forgotten. In this after-glow of Latin literature, lighted up long after their fortune had set, and just before

their long night began, they pass before us, in his verses, with the utmost clearness, like the figures in an actual procession. The nursing of the infant Sun and Moon by Tethys; Proserpine and her companions gathering flowers at early dawn, when the violets are drinking in the dew, still lying white upon the grass; the image of Pallas winding the peaceful blossoms about the steel crest of her helmet; the realm of Proserpine, softened somewhat by her coming, and filled with a quiet joy; the matrons of Elysium crowding to her marriage toilet, with the bridal veil of yellow in their hands; the Manes, crowned with ghostly flowers yet warmed a little, at the marriage feast; the ominous dreams of the mother; the desolation of the home, like an empty bird's-nest or an empty fold, when she returns and finds Proserpine gone, and the spider at work over her unfinished embroidery; the strangely-figured raiment, the flowers in the grass, which were once blooming youths, having both their natural colour and the colour of their poetry in them, and the clear little fountain there, which was once the maiden Cyane;—all this is shown in a series of

descriptions, like the designs in some unwinding tapestry, like Proserpine's own embroidery, the description of which is the most brilliant of these pictures, and, in its quaint confusion of the images of philosophy with those of mythology, anticipates something of the fancy of the Italian Renaissance.

"*Proserpina, filling the house soothingly with her low song, was working a gift against the return of her mother, with labour all to be in vain. In it, she marked out with her needle the houses of the gods and the series of the elements, showing by what law, nature, the parent of all, settled the strife of ancient times, and the seeds of things disparted into their places; the lighter elements are borne aloft, the heavier fall to the centre; the air grows bright with heat, a blazing light whirls round the firmament; the sea flows; the earth hangs suspended in its place. And there were divers colours in it; she illuminated the stars with gold, infused a purple shade into the water, and heightened the shore with gems of flowers; and, under her skilful hand, the threads, with their inwrought lustre, swell up, in momentary counterfeit of the waves; you might think that the sea-wind*

flapped against the rocks, and that a hollow murmur came creeping over the thirsty sands. She puts in the five zones, marking with a red ground the midmost zone, possessed by burning heat; its outline was parched and stiff; the threads seemed thirsty with the constant sunshine; on either side lay the two zones proper for human life, where a gentle temperance reigns; and at the extremes she drew the twin zones of numbing cold, making her work dun and sad with the hues of perpetual frost. She paints in, too, the sacred places of Dis, her father's brother, and the Manes, so fatal to her; and an omen of her doom was not wanting; for, as she worked, as if with foreknowledge of the future, her face became wet with a sudden burst of tears. And now, in the utmost border of the tissue, she had begun to wind in the wavy line of the river Oceanus, with its glassy shallows; but the door sounds on its hinges, and she perceives the goddesses coming; the unfinished work drops from her hands, and a ruddy blush lights up in her clear and snow-white face."

III.

Fragment from Ovid's *Fasti*.

I have reserved to the last what is perhaps the daintiest treatment of this subject in classical literature, the account of it which Ovid gives in the *Fasti*—a kind of Roman Calendar—for the seventh of April, the day of the games of Ceres. He tells over again the old story, with much of which, he says, the reader will be already familiar; but he has something also of his own to add to it, which the reader will hear for the first time; and, like one of those old painters who, in depicting a scene of Christian history, drew from their own fancy or experience its special setting and accessories, he translates the story into something very different from the Homeric hymn. The writer of the Homeric hymn had made Celeus a king, and represented the scene at Eleusis in a fair palace, like the Venetian painters who depict the persons of the Holy Family with royal ornaments. Ovid, on the other hand, is more like certain painters of the early Florentine school, who represent the holy persons amid the more touching circum-

stances of humble life; and the special something of his own which he adds, is a pathos caught from homely things, not without a delightful, just perceptible, shade of humour even, so rare in such work. All the mysticism has disappeared; but, instead, we trace something of that "worship of sorrow," which has been sometimes supposed to have had no place in classical religious sentiment. In Ovid's well-finished elegiacs, Persephone's flower-gathering, the *Anthology*, reaches its utmost delicacy; but I give the following episode for the sake of its pathetic expression.

"*After many wanderings Ceres was come to Attica. There, in the utmost dejection, for the first time, she sat down to rest on a bare stone, which the people of Attica still call the* stone of sorrow. *For many days she remained there motionless, under the open sky, heedless of the rain and of the frosty moonlight. Places have their fortunes; and what is now the illustrious town of Eleusis was then the field of an old man named Celeus. He was carrying home a load of acorns, and wild berries shaken down from the brambles, and dry wood for burning*

on the hearth; his little daughter was leading two goats home from the hills; and at home there was a little boy lying sick in his cradle. 'Mother,' said the little girl — and the goddess was moved at the name of mother — 'what do you, all alone, in this solitary place?' The old man stopped too, in spite of his heavy burden, and bade her take shelter in his cottage, though it was but a little one. But at first she refused to come; she looked like an old woman, and an old woman's coif confined her hair; and as the man still urged her, she said to him, 'Heaven bless you; and may children always be yours! My daughter has been stolen from me. Alas! how much happier is your lot than mine;' and, though weeping is impossible for the gods, as she spoke, a bright drop, like a tear, fell into her bosom. Soft-hearted, the little girl and the old man weep together. And after that the good man said, 'Arise! despise not the shelter of my little home; so may the daughter whom you seek be restored to you.' 'Lead me,' answered the goddess; 'you have found out the secret of moving me;' and she arose from the stone, and followed the old man; and as they went he told her of the sick child at home — how he is restless with pain, and cannot sleep.

And she, before entering the little cottage, gathered from the untended earth the soothing and sleep-giving poppy; and as she gathered it, it is said that she forgot her vow, and tasted of the seeds, and broke her long fast, unaware. As she came through the door, she saw the house full of trouble, for now there was no more hope of life for the sick boy. She saluted the mother, whose name was Metaneira, and humbly kissed the lips of the child, with her own lips; then the paleness left its face, and suddenly the parents see the strength returning to its body; so great is the force that comes from the divine mouth. And the whole family was full of joy — the mother and the father and the little girl; they were the whole household."

What is there in this phase of ancient religion for us, at the present day? The myth of Demeter and Persephone, then, illustrates the power of the Greek religion as a religion of pure ideas — of conceptions, which having no link on historical fact, yet, because they arose naturally out of the spirit of man, and embodied, in adequate symbols, his deepest thoughts concerning the conditions of his physical and spiritual life, main-

tained their hold through many changes, and are still not without a solemnising power even for the modern mind, which has once admitted them as recognised and habitual inhabitants; and, abiding thus for the elevation and purifying of our sentiments, long after the earlier and simpler races of their worshippers have passed away, they may be a pledge to us of the place in our culture, at once legitimate and possible, of the associations, the conceptions, the imagery, of Greek religious poetry in general, of the poetry of all religions.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

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The Bibelot

THIRTY *years ago saw the awakening of that modern æsthetic movement which culminated in Rossetti's* Poems, (*1870*) *Lang's* Ballads and Lyrics of Old France, (*1872*) *Pater's* Studies in the History of the Renaissance, (*1873*) *and Payne's* Poems of Master Francis Villon of Paris, *then first done into English entire* (*1878*).[1]

The same year that Payne's complete version was privately issued to subscribers saw also Swinburne's second series of Poems and Ballads, *wherein, besides the* Ave Atque Vale[2] — *that magnificent ode on Baudelaire,— was set forth a very*

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1 (*1*) The Poems of Master Francis Villon of Paris, now first done into English verse, in the original forms, *by John Payne. (London: Printed for the Villon Society, for private distribution* MDCCCLXXVIII). *Only 157 copies, Fcap 4to, were printed.*

(2) THE SAME (*with a Biographical and Critical Introduction*). *This was an expurgated edition. Crown 8vo. London: Reeves and Turner, 196 Strand,* MDCCCLXXXI.

(3) THE SAME. *Demy 8vo. London:* MDCCCXCII: *Printed for the Villon Society by private subscription, and for private circulation only. The final, uncastrated edition. All three issues are out of print.*

2 *Originally issued in the* Fortnightly Review, *January, 1868. See* The Bibelot, *Vol. IV, No. 12 (December, 1898).*

memorable ballad[3]—*'Bird of the bitter bright grey golden morn,' accompanied by a short series of translations from him who rightly is considered the father of French poetry.*

It is, supposedly, idle to expect, after two decades of silence, that we shall ever be gladdened by further work of this sort from Mr. Swinburne's hands. Therefore is it well worth while to reprint what we do possess,—these ten ballades so incomparably rendered,—especially as an earlier issue[4] *was entirely devoted to Mr. Payne's scholarly, if not wholly poetic versions. The opportunity for comparison will, we doubt not, prove singularly attractive, as, indeed, all comparative studies are fascinating to the true student of literature. And in this instance it is two masters of translation that we are to consider.*

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3 *Previously printed in* The Athenæum, *September 15, 1877. Two of the translations also appeared in the same journal, February 17, 1877, and July 7, 1877.*

4 The Bibelot, *Vol. I, No. 2 (February, 1895).*

FOR AUGUST:

EARTHWORK OUT OF TUSCANY,
(*Two Selections.*)
BY MAURICE HEWLETT.

Translations from the French of Francois Villon.

List, all that love light mirth, light tears, and all
That know the heart of shameful loves, or pure;
That know delights depart, desires endure,
A fevered tribe of ghosts funereal,
Widowed of dead delights gone out of call;
List, all that deem the glory of the rose
Is brief as last year's suns, or last year's snows
The new suns melt from off the sundial.

All this your master Villon knew and sung;
Despised delights, and faint foredone desire;
And shame, a deathless worm, a quenchless fire;
And laughter from the heart's last sorrow wrung,
When half-repentance but makes evil whole,
And prayer that cannot help wears out the soul.

ANDREW LANG.

"THAT which perhaps most forcibly strikes a reader for the first time studying Villon's work is the perfect absence of all conventional restrictions. He rejects nothing as common or unclean and knows—none better—how to draw the splendid wonder of poetic efflorescence from the mangrove swamps of the truanderie and the stagnant marish of the prison or the brothel.

"Villon was the first great poet of the people: his love of the life of common things, the easy familiarity of the streets and highways, his intimate knowledge and love of the home and outdoor life of the merchant, the hawker, the artisan, the mountebank, nay, even the thief, the prostitute and the gipsy of his time, stand out in unequivocal characters from the lineaments of his work. . . . All Paris of the fifteenth century relives in the vivid hurry of his verse: one hears in his stanzas the very popular cries and watchwords of the street and the favourite oaths of the gallants and women of the day. . . . Like the great realistic poet [Baudelaire] of nineteenth-century France, he knew how to force death and horror to give up for him their hidden beauties; and if his own *Fleurs du Mal* are often instinct with the poisons that suggest the marshy miasmatic nature of the soil to which they owe their resplendent colourings, yet the torrent of satire, mockery and invective, that laves their tangled roots, is often over-arched with the subtlest and brightest irises of pure pathos and delicate sentiment."

JOHN PAYNE.

PROEM.

A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON,

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS.

BIRD of the bitter bright grey golden morn
Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous years,
First of us all and sweetest singer born
Whose far shrill note the world of new men hears
Cleave the cold shuddering shade as twilight clears;
When song new-born put off the old world's attire
And felt its tune on her changed lips expire,
Writ foremost on the roll of them that came
Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name!

Alas the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,
That clothed thy life with hopes and sins and fears,
And gave thee stones for bread and tares for corn
And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy starveling peers
Till death clipt close their flight with shameful shears;
Till shifts came short and loves were hard to hire,
When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling wire
Could buy thee bread or kisses; when light fame
Spurned like a ball and haled through brake and briar,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name!

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled and torn!
Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with light quick tears!

Poor perfect voice, most blithe when most forlorn,
That rings athwart the sea whence no man steers
Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells in our ears!
What far delight has cooled the fierce desire
That like some ravenous bird was strong to tire
On that frail flesh and soul consumed with flame,
But left more sweet than roses to respire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name?

ENVOI.

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears and fire,
A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;
Shame soiled thy song, and song assoiled thy shame.
But from thy feet now death has washed the mire,
Love reads out first at head of all our quire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF VILLON.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE FAIR ARMOURESS.

I.

MESEEMETH I heard cry and groan
That sweet who was the armourer's maid;
For her young years she made sore moan,
And right upon this wise she said;
'Ah fierce old age with foul bald head,
To spoil fair things thou art over fain;
Who holdeth me? who? would God I were dead!
Would God I were well dead and slain!

II.

'Lo, thou hast broken the sweet yoke
That my high beauty held above
All priests and clerks and merchant-folk;
There was not one but for my love
Would give me gold and gold enough,
Though sorrow his very heart had riven,
To win from me such wage thereof
As now no thief would take if given.

III.

'I was right chary of the same,
God wot it was my great folly,
For love of one sly knave of them,
Good store of that same sweet had he;
For all my subtle wiles, perdie,
God wot I loved him well enow;
Right evilly he handled me,
But he loved well my gold, I trow.

IV.

'Though I gat bruises green and black,
I loved him never the less a jot;
Though he bound burdens on my back,
If he said "Kiss me, and heed it not,"
Right little pain I felt, God wot,
When that foul thief's mouth, found so sweet,
Kissed me — Much good thereof I got!
I keep the sin and the shame of it.

V.

'And he died thirty year agone.
I am old now, no sweet thing to see;
By God, though, when I think thereon,
And of that good glad time, woe's me,
And stare upon my changed body
Stark naked, that has been so sweet,
Lean, wizen, like a small dry tree,
I am nigh mad with the pain of it.

VI.

'Where is my faultless forehead's white,
The lifted eyebrows, soft gold hair,
Eyes wide apart and keen of sight,
With subtle skill in the amorous air;
The straight nose, great nor small, but fair,
The small carved ears of shapliest growth,
Chin dimpling, colour good to wear,
And sweet red splendid kissing mouth?

VII.

'The shapely slender shoulders small,
Long arms, hands wrought in glorious wise,
Round little breasts, the hips withal
High, full of flesh, not scant of size,
Fit for all amorous masteries;

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

VIII.

'A writhled forehead, hair gone grey,
Fallen eyebrows, eyes gone blind and red,
Their laughs and looks all fled away,
Yea, all that smote men's hearts are fled;
The bowed nose, fallen from goodlihead;
Foul flapping ears like water-flags;
Peaked chin, and cheeks all waste and dead,
And lips that are two skinny rags:

IX.

'Thus endeth all the beauty of us.
The arms made short, the hands made lean,
The shoulders bowed and ruinous,
The breasts, alack! all fallen in;
The flanks too, like the breasts, grown thin;

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

X.

'So we make moan for the old sweet days,
Poor old light women, two or three
Squatting above the straw-fire's blaze,
The bosom crushed against the knee,
Like fagots on a heap we be,
Round fires soon lit, soon quenched and done;
And we were once so sweet, even we!
Thus fareth many and many an one.'

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* The Editor of *The Bibelot* desires to state that the omitted lines are not of his choosing, but were never translated by Mr. Swinburne. They are to be found, of course, in all the modern French texts and are rendered into English in Mr. Payne's Villon Society edition. (1892.)

A DOUBLE BALLAD OF GOOD COUNSEL.

Now take your fill of love and glee,
And after balls and banquets hie;
In the end ye'll get no good for fee,
But just heads broken by and by;
Light loves make beasts of men that sigh;
They changed the faith of Solomon,
And left not Samson lights to spy;
Good luck has he that deals with none!

Sweet Orpheus, lord of minstrelsy,
For this with flute and pipe came nigh
The danger of the dog's heads three
That ravening at hell's door doth lie;
Fain was Narcissus, fair and shy,
For love's love lightly lost and won,
In a deep well to drown and die;
Good luck has he that deals with none!

Sardana, flower of chivalry,
Who conquered Crete with horn and cry,
For this was fain a maid to be
And learn with girls the thread to ply;
King David, wise in prophecy,
Forgot the fear of God for one
Seen washing either shapely thigh;
Good luck has he that deals with none!

For this did Amnon, craftily
Feigning to eat of cakes of rye,
Deflower his sister fair to see,
Which was foul incest; and hereby
Was Herod moved, it is no lie,
To lop the head of Baptist John
For dance and jig and psaltery;
Good luck has he that deals with none!

Next of myself I tell, poor me,
How thrashed like clothes at wash was I
Stark naked, I must needs agree;
Who made me eat so sour a pie
But Katherine of Vaucelles? thereby
Noé took third part of that fun;
Such wedding-gloves are ill to buy;
Good luck has he that deals with none!

But for that young man fair and free
To pass those young maids lightly by,
Nay, would you burn him quick, not he;
Like broom-horsed witches though he fry,
They are sweet as civet in his eye;
But trust them, and you're fooled anon;
For white or brown, and low or high,
Good luck has he that deals with none!

FRAGMENT OF DEATH.

AND Paris be it or Helen dying,
Who dies soever, dies with pain.
He that lacks breath and wind for sighing,
His gall bursts on his heart; and then
He sweats, God knows what sweat! again,
No man may ease him of his grief;
Child, brother, sister, none were fain
To bail him thence for his relief.

Death makes him shudder, swoon, wax pale,
Nose bend, veins stretch, and breath surrender,
Neck swell, flesh soften, joints that fail
Crack their strained nerves and arteries slender.
O woman's body found so tender,
Smooth, sweet, so precious in men's eyes,
Must thou too bear such count to render?
Yes; or pass quick into the skies.

[In the original here follows Villon's masterpiece, the matchless *Ballad of the Ladies of Old Time*, so incomparably rendered in the marvellous version of Mr. Rossetti; followed in its turn by the succeeding poem, as inferior to its companion as is my attempt at translation of it to his triumph in that higher and harder field.— A. C. S.]

It has seemed desirable to here insert Rossetti's incomparable version, well known as it is; also a still later rendering by Stephen Temple — for the text of which we are indebted to Mr. George H. Ellwanger's delightful anthology, *Love's Demesne*. (New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1896.)

TELL me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thais,
Neither of them the fairer woman?
Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere,—
She whose beauty was more than human? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloise, the learned nun,
For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,
Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From Love he won such dule and teen!)
And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaiden,—
Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde the lady of Maine,—
And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there,—
Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
  Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword,—
  But where are the snows of yester-year?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

BALLADE OF THE LADYES OF LONG SYNE.

TELL me wher, in what contree, is
Flora, the beautifulle Romaine?
Thais and Archipiadis,
Wher are they now, those cosins twaine?
And Echo, gretyng her love agein
By banke of river and marge of mere,
Whos beaute was fre fro mortall stayne?
Nay, wher are the snowes that fell last year?

Wher is the lerned Helowis,
For whom undon in celle did plaine
Pierre Abelard at Saint Denys?
For love's reward he had this peine
Where is the quene who did ordeine
That Buridan shulde drift in fere
Sowed in a sacke adoun the Saine?
Nay, wher are the snowes that fell last year?

Quene Blanche, fayre as the floure-de-lys,
Who sang as swete as the meremaid strayne,
Alys too, Bertha, Bietris,
And Hermengarde, who halt the Mayne,
And Joan, the good may of Lorraine,
At Rouen brent by Englyshe fere,—
Wher are they, Virgine soveraine?
Nay, wher are the snowes that fell last year?

Prince, for this sevennyght be not fain,
Nor this twelfmonthe to question wher
They be, withouten this refraine,
Nay, wher are the snowes that fell last year?

STEPHEN TEMPLE.

BALLAD OF THE LORDS OF OLD TIME.

(AFTER THE FORMER ARGUMENT.)

WHAT more? Where is the third Calixt,
Last of that name now dead and gone,
Who held four years the Papalist?
Alphonso king of Aragon,
The gracious lord, duke of Bourbon,
And Arthur, duke of old Britaine?
And Charles the Seventh, that worthy one?
Even with the good knight Charlemain.

The Scot too, king of mount and mist,
With half his face vermilion,
Men tell us, like an amethyst
From brow to chin that blazed and shone;
The Cypriote king of old renown,
Alas! and that good king of Spain,
Whose name I cannot think upon?
Even with the good knight Charlemain.

No more to say of them I list;
'Tis all but vain, all dead and done:
For death may no man born resist,
Nor make appeal when death comes on.
I make yet one more question;
Where's Lancelot, king of far Bohain?
Where's he whose grandson called him son?
Even with the good knight Charlemain.

Where is Guesclin, the good Breton?
The lord of the eastern mountain-chain,
And the good late duke of Alençon?
Even with the good knight Charlemain.

BALLAD OF THE WOMEN OF PARIS.

ALBEIT the Venice girls get praise
For their sweet speech and tender air,
And though the old women have wise ways
Of chaffering for amorous ware,
Yet at my peril dare I swear,
Search Rome, where God's grace mainly tarries,
Florence and Savoy, everywhere,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

The Naples women, as folk prattle,
Are sweetly spoken and subtle enough:
German girls are good at tattle,
And Prussians make their boast thereof;
Take Egypt for the next remove,
Or that waste land the Tartar harries,
Spain or Greece, for the matter of love,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Breton and Swiss know nought of the matter,
Gascony girls or girls of Toulouse;
Two fishwomen with a half-hour's chatter
Would shut them up by threes and twos;
Calais, Lorraine, and all their crews,
(Names enow the mad song marries)
England and Picardy, search them and choose,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Prince, give praise to our French ladies
For the sweet sound their speaking carries;
'Twixt Rome and Cadiz many a maid is,
But no good girl's lip out of Paris.

BALLAD WRITTEN FOR A BRIDEGROOM

WHICH VILLON GAVE TO A GENTLEMAN NEWLY MARRIED TO SEND TO HIS WIFE WHOM HE HAD WON WITH THE SWORD.

At daybreak, when the falcon claps his wings,
No whit for grief, but noble heart and high,
With loud glad noise he stirs himself and springs,
And takes his meat and toward his lure draws nigh;
Such good I wish you! Yea, and heartily
I am fired with hope of true love's meed to get;
Know that Love writes it in his book; for why,
This is the end for which we twain are met.

Mine own heart's lady with no gainsayings
You shall be always wholly till I die;
And in my right against all bitter things
Sweet laurel with fresh rose its force shall try;
Seeing reason wills not that I cast love by
(Nor here with reason shall I chide or fret)
Nor cease to serve, but serve more constantly;
This is the end for which we twain are met.

And, which is more, when grief about me clings
Through Fortune's fit or fume of jealousy,
Your sweet kind eye beats down her threatenings
As wind doth smoke; such power sits in your eye.

Thus in your field my seed of harvestry
Thrives, for the fruit is like me that I set;
God bids me tend it with good husbandry;
This is the end for which we twain are met.

Princess, give ear to this my summary;
That heart of mine your heart's love should forget,
Shall never be: like trust in you put I:
This is the end for which we twain are met.

BALLAD AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF FRANCE.

May he fall in with beasts that scatter fire,
Like Jason, when he sought the fleece of gold,
Or change from man to beast three years entire,
As King Nebuchadnezzar did of old;
Or else have times as shameful and as bad
As Trojan folk for ravished Helen had;
Or gulfed with Proserpine and Tantalus
Let hell's deep fen devour him dolorous,
With worse to bear than Job's worst sufferance,
Bound in his prison-maze with Dædalus,
Who could wish evil to the state of France!

May he four months, like bitterns in the mire,
Howl with head downmost in the lake-springs cold
Or to bear harness like strong bulls for hire
To the Great Turk for money down be sold;
Or thirty years like Magdalen live sad,
With neither wool nor web of linen clad;
Drown like Narciss', or swing down pendulous
Like Absalom with locks luxurious,
Or liker Judas fallen to reprobance;
Or find such death as Simon sorcerous,
Who could wish evil to the state of France!

May the old times come of fierce Octavian's ire,
And in his belly molten coin be told;

May he like Victor in the mill expire,
Crushed between moving millstones on him rolled,
Or in deep sea drenched breathless, more adrad
Than in the whale's bulk Jonas, when God bade:
From Phœbus' light, from Juno's treasure-house
Driven, and from joys of Venus amorous,
And cursed of God most high to the utterance,
As was the Syrian king Antiochus,
Who could wish evil to the state of France!

ENVOY.

Prince, may the bright-winged brood of Æolus
To sea-king Glaucus' wild wood cavernous
Bear him bereft of peace and hope's least glance,
For worthless is he to get good of us,
Who could wish evil to the state of France!

THE DISPUTE OF THE HEART AND BODY OF FRANÇOIS VILLON.

WHO is this I hear? — Lo, this is I, thine heart,
That holds on merely now by a slender string.
Strength fails me, shape and sense are rent apart,
The blood in me is turned to a bitter thing,
Seeing thee skulk here like a dog shivering. —
Yea, and for what? — For that thy sense found sweet. —
What irks it thee? — I feel the sting of it. —
Leave me at peace. — Why? — Nay now, leave me at peace;
I will repent when I grow ripe in wit. —
I say no more. — I care not though thou cease. —

What art thou, trow? — A man worth praise, perfay. —
This is thy thirtieth year of wayfaring. —
'Tis a mule's age. — Art thou a boy still? — Nay. —
Is it hot lust that spurs thee with its sting,
Grasping thy throat? Know'st thou not anything? —
Yea, black and white, when milk is specked with flies,
I can make out. — No more? — Nay, in no wise.
Shall I begin again the count of these? —
Thou art undone. — I will make shift to rise. —
I say no more. — I care not though thou cease. —

I have the sorrow of it, and thou the smart.
Wert thou a poor mad fool or weak of wit,

Then might'st thou plead this pretext with thine heart;
  But if thou know not good from evil a whit,
  Either thy head is hard as stone to hit,
Or shame, not honour, gives thee most content.
What canst thou answer to this argument? —
  When I am dead I shall be well at ease. —
God! what good luck! — Thou art over eloquent. —
  I say no more. — I care not though thou cease. —

Whence is this ill? — From sorrow and not from sin.
  When Saturn packed my wallet up for me
I well believe he put these ills therein. —
  Fool, wilt thou make thy servant lord of thee?
  Hear now the wise king's counsel; thus saith he;
All power upon the stars a wise man hath;
There is no planet that shall do him scathe. —
  Nay, as they made me I grow and I decrease. —
What say'st thou? — Truly this is all my faith. —
  I say no more. — I care not though thou cease. —

Wouldst thou live still? — God help me that I may! —
Then thou must — What? turn penitent and pray? —
Read always — What? — Grave words and good to say;
  Leave off the ways of fools, lest they displease. —
Good; I will do it. — Wilt thou remember? — Yea. —
Abide not till there come an evil day.
  I say no more. — I care not though thou cease.

EPISTLE IN FORM OF A BALLAD TO HIS FRIENDS.

HAVE pity, pity, friends, have pity on me,
Thus much at least, may it please you, of your grace!
I lie not under hazel or hawthorn-tree
Down in this dungeon ditch, mine exile's place
By leave of God and fortune's foul disgrace.
Girls, lovers, glad young folk and newly wed,
Jumpers and jugglers, tumbling heel o'er head,
Swift as a dart, and sharp as needle-ware,
Throats clear as bells that ring the kine to shed,
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave him there?

Singers that sing at pleasure, lawlessly,
Light, laughing, gay of word and deed, that race
And run like folk light-witted as ye be
And have in hand nor current coin nor base,
Ye wait too long, for now he's dying apace.
Rhymers of lays and roundels sung and read,
Ye'll brew him broth too late when he lies dead.
Nor wind nor lightning, sunbeam nor fresh air,
May pierce the thick wall's bound where lies his bed;
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave him there?

O noble folk from tithes and taxes free,
Come and behold him in this piteous case,
Ye that nor king nor emperor holds in fee,
But only God in heaven; behold his face

Who needs must fast, Sundays and holidays,
Which makes his teeth like rakes; and when he hath fed
With never a cake for banquet but dry bread,
Must drench his bowels with much cold watery fare,
With board nor stool, but low on earth instead;
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave him there?

Princes afore-named, old and young foresaid,
Get me the king's seal and my pardon sped,
And hoist me in some basket up with care:
So swine will help each other ill bested,
For where one squeaks they run in heaps ahead.
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave him there?

THE EPITAPH IN FORM OF A BALLAD

WHICH VILLON MADE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS COMRADES, EXPECTING TO BE HANGED ALONG WITH THEM.

MEN, brother men, that after us yet live,
Let not your hearts too hard against us be;
For if some pity of us poor men ye give,
The sooner God shall take of you pity.
Here are we five or six strung up, you see,
And here the flesh that all too well we fed
Bit by bit eaten and rotten, rent and shred,
And we the bones grow dust and ash withal;
Let no man laugh at us discomforted,
But pray to God that he forgive us all.

If we call on you, brothers, to forgive,
Ye should not hold our prayer in scorn, though we
Were slain by law; ye know that all alive
Have not wit alway to walk righteously;
Make therefore intercession heartily
With him that of a virgin's womb was bred,
That his grace be not as a dry well-head
For us, nor let hell's thunder on us fall;
We are dead, let no man harry or vex us dead,
But pray to God that he forgive us all.

The rain has washed and laundered us all five,
And the sun dried and blackened; yea, perdie,

Ravens and pies with beaks that rend and rive
Have dug our eyes out, and plucked off for fee
Our beards and eyebrows; never are we free,
Not once, to rest; but here and there still sped,
Drive at its wild will by the wind's change led,
More pecked of birds than fruits on garden-wall;
Men, for God's love, let no gibe here be said,
But pray to God that he forgive us all.

Prince Jesus, that of all art lord and head,
Keep us, that hell be not our bitter bed;
We have nought to do in such a master's hall.
Be not ye therefore of our fellowhead,
But pray to God that he forgive us all.

HERE END THESE TRANSLATIONS FROM
THE FRENCH OF FRANÇOIS VILLON
AS DONE INTO ENGLISH BY
ALGERNON CHARLES
SWINBURNE.

THE BREAK-UP OF CHINA

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PRESENT COMMERCE, CURRENCY, WATERWAYS, ARMIES, RAILWAYS, POLITICS, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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THE CRITIC.

JULY NUMBER.

Thackeray.—Thackeray's uncollected contributions to Punch are continued.

Morris.—The Life of William Morris by J. W. Mackail, with two portraits and illustrations by H. T. New.

Sarcey.—The late Francisque Sarcey, with portrait.

Alexander.—John W. Alexander, painter, decorator, illustrator, by Roger Riordan. Fully illustrated.

Westcott.—The writing of "David Harum," Edward Noyse Westcott's famous novel, by his friend Forbes Heermans. Portrait and picture of Mr. Westcott's home.

Beside the above is a bibliographical sketch with portrait of C. W. Chestnutt, author of "The Conjure Woman," and an article on "The Chances of New Writers," that is as encouraging as it is timely.

This number is rich in portraits, including those of Augustin Daly, John Burroughs, Annie Russell, F. N. Doubleday, S. S. McClure, Chas. Warren Stoddard, Stanley Waterloo, Rosa Bonheur, John Lockwood Kipling, the father of Rudyard Kipling, etc.

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An address before the Omar Khayyam Club by the Hon. John Hay.

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The Bibelot

LIKE a belated Spring the re-issue of Earthwork Out of Tuscany *has been long in coming up our way.*[1] *And now that it is once more accessible, one can but regret that this incomparable first book of Mr. Hewlett's fashioning should reach us somewhat shorn of its earlier simplicity. To be perfectly frank, the omission of three dramatic scenes, and the Botticelli's frontispiece is poorly made up by the additional essay — Of Boils and the Ideal, — or the so-called embellishments of the text by Mr. James Kerr Lawson. One could well have wished that this amateur in art had spared us his travesty of the old Florentine's* Nascita di Venere! *As it seems to us, the dreadful habit of badly illustrating an exquisite little book of poetic suggestiveness is an impertinence that admirers of* Earthwork *in its first edition did not deserve!*

But — such publishing vagaries aside —

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1 Earthwork Out of Tuscany: Being Impressions and Translations of Maurice Hewlett. *Fcap. 8vo. London, 1895.*

* The Same, *with illustrations by James Kerr Lawson. Crown 8vo. London, 1899.*

the book 's the thing! That, happily, has not suffered undue revision, and we now reprint A Sacrifice at Prato[2] *together with the three pretty reminiscences of Italian women, feeling sure that their tender charm is not born of a passing mood but is of the nature of permanent literary impression.*

---

2 *In the second edition the sub-title is altered to "An Old-fashioned Narrative" and the following footnote appended:*

"Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that this article was written from the stand-point of a cultivated Pagan of the Empire, who should have journeyed in Time as well as Space."

FOR SEPTEMBER:

THE TWO SIDES OF THE RIVER, AND OTHER POEMS

By

WILLIAM MORRIS.

EARTHWORK OUT OF TUSCANY:

I. A Sacrifice at Prato.
II. Ilaria, Mariota, Bettina.

I.

A SACRIFICE AT PRATO.

(FROM A RECOVERED NARRATIVE.)

THE rim of the sun was burning the hill tops, and already the vanguard of his strength stemming the morning mists, when I and my companion first trod the dust of a small town which stood in our path. It still lay very hard and white, however, and sharply edged to its girdle of olives and mulberry trees drenched in dews, a compactly folded town well fortified by strong walls and many towers, with the mist upon it and softly over it like a veil. For it lay well under the shade of the hills awaiting the sun's coming. In the streets, though they were by no means asleep, but, contrariwise, busy with the traffic of men and pack-mules, there was a shrewd bite as of night air; looking up we could perceive how faint the blue of the sky was, and the cloud-flaw how rosy yet with the flush of Aurora's beauty-sleep. Therefore we were glad to get into the market-place, filled with people and set round with goodly brick buildings, and to feel the light and warmth steal about our limbs.

"It would seem fitting," said I, "seeing that day is at hand and already we enjoy the first-fruits of his largess, that we should seek some neighbouring shrine where we might praise the gods. For never yet was land that had not, as its fairest work, gods: and in a land so fair as this there must needs be gods yet fairer, and shrines to case them in." This I said, having observed pious offerings laid upon the shrines of divers gods by the road. At the which, looking curiously, it seemed to me that the inhabitants of this country were favoured above the common with devout thoughts and the objects of them — gods and goddesses. You might not pass a farm without its tutelary altar to the genius of the place, some holy shade, or — as she was figured as a matron — some great land-goddess, perhaps Cybele, or the Bona Dea; and pleasant it was to me to see that the tufts of common flowers set before her were for the most part smiling and fresh with the dew that assured an early gathering. In the streets of the city, moreover, I had seen many more such, slight affairs (it is true) of painted earthenware, some gaudily adorned with green and yellow colour and of work-

manship as raw, some painted flat on the wall of a recess (in which was more skill, though the device was often gross enough — to dwell upon death and despair), and some again of choice beauty, both of form and colour, and a most rare blitheness, as it might be the spirit of the contrivers breaking through the hard stone. And all of these I knew to be gods, but the devices upon them were hard to be read, or approved. There was a naked youth pierced with arrows, wherein the texture of smooth flesh accorded not well with the bitterness of his hurt; a young man also, bearded, of spare and mournful habit and girt with a rope round his middle; in his hands were wounds, as again of arrows, and there was a rent in his garment where a javelin had torn a way into his side. Such suffering of wounds and broken flesh stared sharply up against the young flowers and grasses which spoke of healthy wind and rain and a sun-kissed earth. Goddesses also I saw — a virgin of comely red and white visage; yellow-haired she was, crowned like a king's daughter; at her side a wheel, cruelly spiked on the outer edge and not easily to be related to so heartsome

a maid. But before them all (with one grim exception, to be sure) I saw the Earth-Mother who had been upon the farm and homestead-walls, of the same high perfection of form, and in raiment stately and adorned, yet (it would seem) something sorrowful as she might mourn the loss of lover or young child. Now the darkest sight I saw was that exception before rehearsed; and it was this. A black cross stood in the most joyful places of the city, and one suffered upon it to very death. Whereat I marvelled greatly, saying, "Who is the man thus tormented whom the people worship as a god?" And my companion answered,

"A great god he is, if the country report lie not, and has many names which amount to this, that he has freed this nation from bondage and died that he may live again, and they too. And of the truth of what they say I cannot speak; but I think he is Bacchus the Redeemer, who, as you, Balbus, know, was no wanton reveller in lasciviousness, but a very god of great benevolence and of wisdom truly dark and awful. Who also took our mortal nature upon him and suffered in the shades: rising whence (for

he was god and man) like the dawn from the night's bosom, or the flooding of spring weather from the iron gates of winter, he sped over land and sea, touching earth and the dwellers upon it. And to those he touched tongues were given and soothsaying, and to many the transports of inspiration and divine madness, as of poets and rhapsodists. And tragedy and choral odes are his, and the furious splendour of dances. But of the worship of Dionysus you know something, having been at Eleusis and beheld the holy mysteries.

"Now the god of this people has the same gift of tongues and madness of possession. To him are also sacred priests of the oracle, and high tragedies, and the wailing of music, and streaming processions of virgins and young boys. He too agonised and arose stronger and more shining than before, dying, indeed, and rising at the very vernal equinox we have mentioned. He too is worshipped in certain Mysteries whereat the confession of iniquity and the cleansing of hearts come first: and the sacrifice is just that wheaten cake and fruit of the vine whereof, at Eleusis, you have praised to me

the simplicity and ethic beauty. And he can inspire his devotees with frenzy. For I have heard that certain men of the country, on a day, and urged by his dæmon, run naked from place to place in honour of him, lashing their bare backs with ox-goads; and will fast by the week together, they and the women alike; and that pious virgins, under stress of these things, swoon and are floated betwixt earth and heaven, and afterwards relate their blissful encounters and prophesy strange matters; receiving also dolorous wounds (which nevertheless are very sweet to them) like to the wounds which he himself received unto death; and all these things they endure because they are mystically fraught with the wisdom and efficacy of the god. Nay, I have been told that in the parts over sea, towards the North and West, he is worshipped, just as at Eleusis, with pipes and timbrels and brazen cymbals and all excess of music; and there they dance in his service and suffer the ecstasies of the Mænads and Corybants in the Dionysiac revel. But this I find quaint to be believed."

Now when I had heard so much, I was the more desirous to find some temple where I

could observe the cult of this wounded god, and so sought counsel of my friend versed in the people's learning. To my questioning he replied that it would be easy. We were (said he) in the market-place among the buyers and chafferers of fruit, vegetables, earthenware, milk, eggs, and such country produce; which honest folk, it being the hour of the morning sacrifice and the temple facing us, would soon abandon their brisk toil for religion's sake; whereupon we too would go. So I looked across the square and saw a very fair building, lofty and many windowed, all of clean white marble, banded over with bars of a smooth black stone, curiously carved, moreover, in sculptured work of gods and men and of flowers and fruits — all cut in the pure marble. At one side was a noble rostrum, of the like fine stone, whereon young boys and girls, as it were fauns and dryads and other woodland creatures, capered as they list: and above the midmost door a semi-circle of pale blue enamel, whereon was the image of the Great Goddess in gleaming white. She was of smiling debonnair countenance and in the full pride of her blossom-time — being as a

young woman whose girdle is new loosed to the will of her lord — and in her arms was a naked child, finely wrought to the size of life. On either side of her a beautiful youth (in whom I must needs admire the smoothness of their chins and the bravery of their vesture shining in the clear light), did reverence to the Goddess and the child: and there were beings, winged like birds, with the faces of strong boys, but no bodies at all that I could see, who flew above them all. This was brave work, very wonderful to me in a people who, thus excellently inspired and having such comely smiling divinities and so clear a vision of them before their eyes, could yet be curious after suffering heroes and stabbed virgins and gods with mangled limbs. But we went into the temple with the good people of the country-side to the sound of bells from a high tower hard by. And I was something surprised that they brought no beasts with them for the sacrifice, nor any of the fruits which were so abundant in the land; but my companion reminded me again that the sacrifice was ready prepared within, and was, as it were, emblematical of all fruits and every

sort of meat, being that wine and bread into which you may comprehend all bodily and (by a figure) ghostly sustenance. By this we were within the temple, which I now perceived was a pantheon, having altars to all the gods, some only of whose shrines I had remarked on the way thither. Dark and lofty it was, with piered arches that soared into the mist, and jewelled windows painfully worked in histories and fables of old time: — all as far apart as conceivably might be from the holy places of my own country; for whereas, with us, the level gaze of the sun is never absent, and through the colonnades you would see stretches of the far blue country, or, perchance, the shimmer of the restless sea, here no light of day could penetrate, and all the senses might apprehend must be of solemn darkness, longing thoughts to cleave it, and, afar off and dim, some flutter of even light as of blest abodes. A strange people! to despise the sure and fair, for the taunting shadows of desire. But, growing more familiar in the middle of newness and the awe that comes of it, I was again amazed at the number of the gods, their nature and sort. I saw again the arrow-stricken youth, whom

we call Asclepius (but never knew thus tormented — as with his father's arrows!) and again the Maid of the Wheel, Fortune as I suppose: but with us the wheel is not so manifestly bitter. Then also the wounded hero, cowled and corded, ragged exceedingly, the like of whom we have not, unless it be some stripling loved by an immortal and wounded to death by grudging Fate, as Atys or Adonis. And if, indeed, this were one of them, the image-maker did surely err in making him of so vile a presence — a thing against all likelihood that the gods, being themselves of super-excellent shapeliness, should stoop to anything of less favour. Yet he was of singular sweetness in his pains, and high fortitude: and he was much loved of the people, as I afterwards learned. And one was a young knight, winged and with a sword in his hand; at his feet a grievous worm of many folds. This I must take for Perseus but that his radiancy did rather point him for Phœbus, the lord of days and the red sun. But in the centre of the whole temple was an altar, high and broad, fenced about with steps and a rail, which I took to be made unto the god of

gods or perhaps the king of that country, until I saw the black cross and the Agonist hanging from it as one dead. Then I knew that the chief god of this people was Dionysus the Redeemer, if it were really he. But I had reason to alter my opinion on that matter as you shall hear.

By this the temple was filled with the country folk who flocked in with the very reek of their toil upon them and hardly so much as their implements and marketable wares left behind. They were of all ages and conditions, both youths and maids, arrowy, tall and open-eyed; and aged ones there were, bowed by labour and seamed with the stress of weather or the assaults of unstaying Fate: whereof, for the most part, the women sat down against the wall and plied dextrously their fans; but the men stood leaning against the pillars which held the timbers of the roof. And they conversed easily together, and some were merry, and others, as I could perceive, beset with affairs of government or business — for they talked more vehemently of these matters than of others, as men will, even beneath the very eyelids of the god. And so I could under-

stand that this sacrifice was not the yearly celebrating of high mysteries, but the common piety of every day with which it is rather seemly than essential we should begin our labouring. There were, indeed, signs in the apparelling of the temple that more solemn festivals were sometimes held, as the delivery of oracles, the calculation of auspices and such like: that, at least, I took to be the intention of small recesses along the walls, that, through a grating of fine brass, a priest of the sanctuary uttered the wisdom of the god in sentences which the meaner sort should fit with what ease they might to their circumstances. For, I suppose, it is still found good that the dark saying of the Oracle should be illumined by the subtlety of the initiate and not by the necessities of the simple. And while I was thus musing I found the ministrants in shining white about the great altar, busied with the preparation for the rite, lighting the torches (very inconsiderable for so large a building, but, mayhap, proportionate to the condition of the people): and they placed a great book upon the altar, and bowed themselves ere they left. And soon afterwards, to the ringing of a bell,

came the priest's boy carrying the offering of the altar, and the priest himself in stiff garments of white and yellow.

Now, for the sacrifice, I could not well understand it, save that it was very shortly done and with a light heart accepted by the people, who (I thought) held it as of the number of those services whose bare performance is efficacious and wholesome — on account, partly of reverent antiquity and long usage, and partly as having some hidden virtue best known to the god in whose honour it is done. For in my own country, I know well, there were many such rites, whose commission edified the people more than their omission would have dishonoured the god: wise men, therefore, (as priests and philosophers) who would live in peace, bow their bodies by rule, knowing surely that their souls may be bolt upright notwithstanding. So here were many solemn acts which, doubtless, once had some now unfathomable design and purport, diligently rehearsed, while the worshippers gazed about with dull unconcern, or, being young, cast eyes of longing upon the country wenches set laughing and rosy by the wall, or, old,

nursed their infirmities. And, on a sudden, a bell rang; and again rang; and the packed body of men and women fell upon their faces, and so remained in a horrific silence for a space where a man might count a score. Thereafter another bell, as of release. So the assembly rose to their feet and, as I saw, swept from their foreheads and breast the dust of the temple floor. But as soon as it was over, a very old priest came through the press and offered the same sacrifice in a little guarded shrine at the lower end, amid many lamps and wax torches and glittering ornaments. Here was more devotion among the people, indeed a great struggling and elbowing just so as to touch the altar, or the steps of it, or the priest's hem, or even the rails which fenced the shrine. And with some show of good reason was this hubbub, as I learned. For here was indeed treasured the Girdle of Venus (this being her very sanctuary) and as much desired as ever it was by women great with child or wanting to conceive. And I looked very curiously upon it, but the Girdle I could never see; only there was a painted image over the altar of the great queen-mother, Venus Gen-

etrix herself, depicted as a broad-browed, placid matron giving of the fruits of her bounteous breasts to a male child. Then I knew that this was that same Goddess who stood over the outer door of the place, and was well pleased to find that the people, howsoever ignorantly, adored the power that enwombs the world — Venus, the life-bringer and quickener of things that breathe, — and could, in this matter, touch hearts with the wise. So with this thought, that truly God was one and men divers, I came out of the temple well pleased, into the level light of the day's beam.

In the tavern doorway, under a bush of green ilex, we sat down in company to eat bread and peaches sopped in the wine of the country, and talked very briskly of all the things we had seen and heard. And soon into the current of our discourse was drawn a dark-faced youth, who had been observing us earnestly for some time from under his hanging brows, and who, growing mighty curious (as I find the way of them is), must know who and whence we were and of what belief and condition in the world. So when I had satisfied him, "Turn for turn," said I,

"my honest friend: being strangers, as you have learned, we have seen many things which touch us nearly, and some which are hard of reading. But this very reading is to us of high concernment, for these matters relate to religion, and religion, of what sort soever it may be, no man can venture to despise. For certain I am, that, as a man hath never seen the gods, so he may never be sure that he hath ever conceived them, even darkly, as in a mirror. For we are dwellers in a cave, my friend, with our backs to the light, and may not tell of a truth whether the shadows that flit and fade be indeed gods or no. Tell me, therefore, (for I am puzzled by it) is the goddess whose presentment I yet see over your temple-porch, that Mother of gods and men, yea, even Mother of life itself, to whom we also bend the neck?"

"She is, sir, as we believe, Mother of God; and therefore, God being author of life, Mother of life and all things living."

"It is as I had believed," said I, "and you, young sir, and I, may bow together in that temple of hers without offence. For the temple is to her honour as I conceive?"

"Why, yes," he answered, "it is raised to her most holy name and to that of our Lord."

"And your Lord, who is this? and which altar is his? For there were many."

"The great altar is his, and indeed he is to be worshipped in all," said the young man.

"He is then the tortured god, whose semblance hangs upon the black cross?"

"He is."

Then I begged him to tell me why these mournful images were scattered over his goodly earth, these maimed gods, this blood and weeping; but I may not set down all that he told me seeing that much of it was dark, and much, as I thought, not pertinent to the issue. Much again was said with his hands, which I cannot interpret here. Suffice it that I learned this concerning the Agonist, that he was the son of the goddess and greater than she, though in a sense less. Mortal he was, and immortal, abject to look upon, being indeed accounted a malefactor and crucified like a thief; and yet a king of men, speaking wisdom whereof the like hath hardly been heard. For of two things he taught there would seem to be no bottom to them,

so profound and unsearchable they are. And one of them was this,—"The kingdom is within you" (or some such words); and the other was, "Who will lose his life shall save it." Whereof, methinks, the first comprehends all the teaching of the Academy and the second that of the Porch. So this man must needs have been a god, and whether the son or no of the Soul of the World, greater than she. For what she did, as it were by necessity and her blind inhering power, he *knew*. Therefore he must have been Wisdom itself. And thus I knew that he could not be Dionysus the Saviour, though he might have many of his attributes; nor simply that son of Venus whom Ausonius alone of our poets saw fastened to a cross. So at last, "I will tell you," said I, "who this god really is, as it seems to me. Being of vile estate and yet greatest of all; being mortal and yet immortal, god and man; being at once most wise and most simple, and (as such his condition imports) intermediate between Earth and Heaven, he must needs be the Divine Eros, concerning whom Plato's words are yet with us. So I can understand why he is so wise, why he

suffers always, and yet cannot be driven by torment nor persuaded by sophisms to cease loving. For the necessity of love is to crave ever; and he is Love himself. Wherefore I am very sure he can lead men, if they will, from the fair things of the world to those infinitely fairer things in themselves whereby what we now have are so very fair to see. And he may well be son of this goddess and nourished by her milk; for it behooves us that a god should stand between Earth and Heaven and be compact of the elements of either, so that he should condescend the wisdom of his head to instruct the clemency of his heart. And we know, you and I, that the gods are but attributes of God, whose intellect (as I say) may well be in Heaven, but his heart is in the Earth, and is the core of it. For so we say of the poet that his heart is ever in his fair work."

Thus we took our wine and were well content to sit in the sunshine.

II.

ILARIA, MARIOTA, BETTINA.

(STUDIES IN TRANSLATION FROM STONE.)

GREATEST of great ladies is Ilaria, *potens Luccæ*, sleeping easily, with chin firmly rounded to the vault, where she has slept for five hundred years, and still a power in Lucca of the silver planes. It was a white-hot September day I went to pay my devotions to her shrine. Lucca drowsed in a haze, her bleached arcades of trees lifeless in the glare of high noon; all the valley was winking, the very bells had no strength to chime: and then I saw Ilaria lie in the deep shade waiting for the judgment. Ilaria was a tall Tuscan — the girls of Lucca are out of the common tall, and straight as larches — of fine birth and a life of minstrels and gardens. Pompous processions, trapped horses, emblazonings, were hers, and all refinements of High Masses and Cardinals. So she lived once a life as stately-ordered as old dance-music, in the airy corridors of a great marble palace, swept hourly by the thin, clear air of the Lucchesan plain; and her lord went out to war with Pisa or Pescia, or even further

afield, following Emperor or Pope to that Monteaperti which made Arbia run colour of wine, or shrill Benevento, or Altopascio which cost the Florentines so dear.[1] But Ilaria stayed at home to trifle with lap-dogs and jongleurs under the orange trees; heard boys make stammering love, and laughed lightly at their *Decameron* travesty, being too proud to be ashamed or angered; and sometimes (for she was not too proud but that love should be of the party), she pulled a ring from one lithe finger, and looked down while the lad kissed it for a holy relic and put it in his bosom reverently,—pretending not to see. But, Ilaria, you knew well what gave colour to the faint and worn old words about *Fior di spin giallo*, or *O Dea fatale*, or

> "O Dio de' Dei!
> La più bellina mi parete voi;
> O quanto sete cara agli occhi miei!"

And so the days passed in your square corner palace, until the plague came down with the North wind, and you bowed your

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1 Historically he could have done none of these things, except, perhaps, fight at Altopascio.

proud neck before it like a mountain pine. Young to die, young to die and leave the pleasant ways of Lucca, the green ramparts, the grassy walks in the pastures where the hawks fly and the shadows fleet over the green and gold of early May. Young enough, Ilaria. Scorner of love, now Death is at hand, with the bats' wings and wet scythe they give him in the Piazza, when your lord comes triumphing or God's Body takes the air: what of him, Madonna? Let him come, says Ilaria, with raised eyebrows and a wintry smile. Yet she fought: her thin hands held off the scythe at arms' length; she set her teeth and battled with the winged beast. Whenas she knew it must be, suddenly she relaxed her hold, and Death had his way with her.

Then her women came about her and robed her in a long robe, colour of olive leaves, and soft to the touch. And they covered soberly her feet and placed them on a crouching dog, which was Lucca. But her fine hands they folded peace-wise below her bosom, to rest quietly there like the clasps of a girdle. Her gentle hair (bright brown it was, like a yearling chestnut) they crowned

also, and closed down her ringed eyes. So they let her lie till judgment come. And when I saw her the close robe still folded her about and ran up her throat lovingly to her chin, till her head seemed to thrust from it as a flower from its calyx. It would seem, too, as if her bosom rose and fell, that her nostrils quivered when the wind blew in and touched them; and the hem of her garment being near me, I was fain to kiss it and say a prayer to the divinity haunting that place. So I left the presence well disposed in my heart to glorify God for so fair a sight.

Whereafter I took the way to Florence among the vineyards and tangled hill-sides; and, anon, in the broad plain I stayed at Prato to honour the lady of the town. Madonna della Cintola she is called now, and one Luca, a worker in clay, knew her mind most intimately and did all her will. Quiet days she had lived at Prato, being wife to a decent metal-worker there and keeper of his house and stuff. Mariota she was then called for all her name, but as to her parentage none knew it, save that Marco's Vanna had been both frail and fair, and when she had been in flower the great Lord

Ottoboni had flowered likewise—and often in her company. Giovanna I had never known; she died before her lord married the lady Adhelidis of Verona and the seven days' tilting were held in her honour in a field below the city wall. But when Luca first knew Mariota and saw how her mother's pride beaconed from her smooth brow, the girl was standing in the Piazza in a tattered green kirtle and bodice that gaped at the hooks, played upon by sun, and fallow wind, and longing looks driven at her eyes in vain. The wench carried her head and light fardel of years like a Princess; would laugh to show her fine teeth if your jest pleased her; and then she would look straightly upon you and be glad of you. If you pleased her not, she would look through you to the mountains or the church-tower. She had as squarely a modelled chin as ever I saw, and her lips firmly set and redder than strawberries in a wet May. None taught her anything; none, that Luca could learn, gave her sup or bed. He was a boy then and would have given her both. I think she knew he favoured her —what girl does not? Everybody favoured Mariota, stayed as she passed, and followed

her stealthily with troubled eyes. But he was a moody boy then, at the mercy of dreams, and stammered when he was near her, blushing. When he came back she was seventeen years old, and the metal-worker's wife. It was then Luca saw her, in the street called of the Eye, where climbing plants top the convent wall and from the garden comes the scent of wall-flowers and sweet marjoram.

At her man's door she was standing, bare-footed, fray-kirtled as of old; but riper, of more assured and triumphant beauty. In her arms a boy-child, lusty and half-naked, struggled to be fed, seeking with both fat hands to forage for himself. Turning her grey eyes, where pride slumbered and shame had never been, she knew Luca again, made him welcome at the door, with superb assurance set wine and olives and bread before him; and so stood at the table while he ate, gravely recovering one by one the features of his face, smiling, preoccupied with her pleasure and unconscious of the cooing child. For with matronly composure she had eased my gentleman as soon as she had provided for her guest.

In comes the metal-worker, Sor Matteo, burly but watchful in a greasy apron, eyes the lad up and down with much burdensome pondering of hand to scrubby chin, as to say to Mariota "I'm no fool." With never a blush, nor a quailing of the eyes' level beam, Mariota begs cousin Luca to become conscious of her master.

There were the makings of a piece of right Boccacesque in all this, and the *padrone* showed manifest disinclination for his accustomed part: but Luca's candid face disclaimed all dark-entry work. Mariota hurried to her task. A modeller in clay, a statuary, *via*, an admirer of the choicer contrivings of Mother Nature! What and if he should find his cousin, his scarce-remembered gossip Mariota, worth an artist's half-closed eye! And the *bambinaccio* (with a side-look and face averted as she spoke) — *ecco!* — many a Gesulino showed a leaner thigh and cheeks less peachy than he. Had Papa seen the new dimple in Beppino's chin? And more soft piping to the same tune. Master Matteo was appeased; but Luca was far adrift with other matters. Love, for him, lay not in flesh and blood alone; rather, in

what flesh and blood signified in another clay, not Messer Domeneddio's, but his own chosen task-stuff. He had come hither to Prato on the commission of the Opera, to work a *Madonna col Bambino* for the great door of the Duomo. Well! he had his Madonna to hand, it would seem:—Mariota at the door of the smith's house, confident, lissom and fresh, and the lusty child groping for his breakfast. The light had been upon her, gleamed upon her skin, her brimming eyes, her glossy brown hair. What a bravery was hers! What a glorified presentment of young life, new-budded, was here! The town gaped, the husband admired; but Mariota, with her square chin and high carriage, looked as straightly before her, when in pale blue and silver-white, Madonna with the Babe and the holy deacons Stephen and Laurence stood, four months afterwards, within the shadow of the great church, and shone out to the day.

I pay silent respect to strapping Mariota and her baby-boy in the country of Boccace. Then, when I am in Florence again, under the spell of the city life, I lounge in the Borg' Ognissanti, or across Arno in the *quartiere*

San Niccolò, or out by San Frediano where Botticelli in his green old age pruned his vines, or in the pent streets between the Via della Pergola and Santa Croce, and watch the townsfolk lead their lives of patchwork and easy laughter. I fear I have a taste for such company. I am fond of verdure; I like trees as well as men: every oak for me has its hamadryad informing it. I like flowers better than men; and the most beautiful flower I know is a girl. I have a sweetheart in the Bargello, as you shall hear. I believe she is one of Donatello's sowing; but the critics are divided. I cannot trace Verocchio's bluntened lineaments in her, nor Mino's peaksomeness, nor anything of Desiderio. She's not very pretty, but she's like a summer flower, say, a campanula; and that is why I love to watch her and talk to her in this grandfatherly fashion. Bettina, I say to her, are you, I wonder, twelve years old yet? You cannot be much more I think, for you have let your bodice-strap slip off one of your shoulders and betray you to the sun. You are but a round rose-bud now and no one thinks any harm; but some day the sun will look at

you in an odd way, and then, suddenly, you will be ashamed, and draw your frock right up to your neck.

And your hair strays where it likes at present. I know you have a golden fillet of box-leaves round your brow: that is because you are only a little girl still, not more than twelve. And you have tied the ends up in a sort of knot. But you romp so much and laugh so — I know you have two bright rows of little teeth — that you can never expect to keep tidy. Why, even now, while I am scolding you, you are itching to laugh and run away. I see a wavy lock trailing down your neck, *ragazza*, and those heavy tresses on your temples, instead of being drawn meekly back, droop down over your temples, and cover up your little ears. Don't you know that Florentine ladies are proud of their foreheads, and when they have pretty ears, always show them? Some day, my dear, you will go out into the world; and your hair will be twisted up into coils with gold braid; perhaps you will have on it a flowery garland of Messer Domenico's making, and a string of Venice beads round your throat. And when that time comes,

you won't let the sun play with your neck any more; he won't know his romp when he sees her in stiff velvet of Genoa and a high collar edged with seed-pearls.

And you won't look me in the eyes as you are doing now, saucy girl, with your chin pushed forward and your mouth all in a pucker — who's to know whether you are going to pout or giggle? — and your pert green eyes wide open, as if to say "Who's this old thickhead staring at me so hard?" No, Bettina, you will drop them instead; you will blush all over your neck and cheeks, and hang your round head. You have chestnuts in your two fists now I know; there's some of the flour sticking to the corners of your mouth, little slut. But then you will have a fan perhaps, or a spyglass, or at least a mass-book in the mornings; and when I am looking at you, your fingers will tie themselves in knots and be very interesting. In two year's time, Bettina!

But though I shan't love you half as much as I do now, I shall always come to see you I think; and, as I shall be a very old man by that time, perhaps you will still sit on a stool at my knee and give me a kiss now

and then — oh, a mere bird's peck, just for kindness. . . . . The Via de' Bardi is grey, and you are there in yellow. You are like a young daffodil dancing in the winter grass. But soon you will have strained to your full flower-time, and I see you in your summering, lithe and rather languid, with heavy-lidded eyes, and a slow smile. Then you will not dance; but, instead, you will stoop gravely like a tall garden lily, and give your white hand to the lover kneeling below.

And all in two years, my little Bettina!

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THE TWO SIDES OF | THE RIVER | HAPLESS LOVE | AND | THE FIRST FORAY OF | ARISTOMENES | BY | WILLIAM MORRIS | LONDON | 1876 | [Not for sale.]

Such is the title of a thin, privately printed pamphlet, crown octavo, which has become one of the introuvables *dear to collectors, and commanding from four to six guineas whenever a stray copy turns up in the London book sales.*[1]

Of the contents of this little book the second and third poems have never been included in any re-issue of Morris's poetry.[2] *A reprint, therefore, of the entire text will, we believe, satisfy all admirers of his work that these two discarded pieces are well worth recapture, belonging as they do to*

---

1 *It has been described with loving accuracy by Mr. H. Buxton Forman in* The Books of William Morris, *London, 1897. See pp. 85-87.*

2 *The Two Sides of The River originally appeared in* The Fortnightly Review, *October, 1868, and remained out of reach until 1891 when* Poems by the Way *was published. Hapless Love is first found in* Good Words, *1 April, 1869; the "Aristomenes" in* The Athenæum *for May 13, 1876.*

the immediate period of The Earthly Paradise. *To them, we have added* Winter Weather, *taken from a still earlier source,* — The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine for 1856; *wherein also are found four other poems, reprinted two years later in* The Defence of Guenevere.

"*The fifth was omitted from that volume for some forgotten reason, perhaps because it was thought too like the famous "Riding Together". But to that poem it forms so perfect a pendant, and it is in itself of such strong and delicate beauty, that it claims rescue from oblivion.*"[3]

---

3 *See* The Life of William Morris *by J. W. Mackail, (2 vols., Octavo, London, 1899,) Vol. I, Pp. 93-96.*

FOR OCTOBER:

TWO APPRECIATIONS:

I ÆSTHETIC POETRY
II DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

BY WALTER PATER.

THE TWO SIDES OF THE RIVER:

HAPLESS LOVE

and

THE FIRST FORAY OF ARISTOMENES.

WINTER WEATHER.

The Youths.

O WINTER, O white winter, wert thou gone
No more within the wilds were I alone
Leaping with bent bow over stock and stone!

No more alone my love the lamp should burn,
Watching the weary spindle twist and turn,
Or o'er the web hold back her tears and yearn:
O winter, O white winter, wert thou gone!

The Maidens.

Sweet thoughts fly swiftlier than the drifting snow,
And with the twisting threads sweet longings grow,
And o'er the web sweet pictures come and go,
For no white winter are we long alone.

The Youths.

O stream so changed, what hast thou done to me,
That I thy glittering ford no more can see
Wreathing with white her fair feet lovingly?

See, in the rain she stands, and, looking down
With frightened eyes upon thy whirlpools brown,
Drops to her feet again her girded gown.
O hurrying turbid stream, what hast thou done?

The Maidens.
The clouds lift, telling of a happier day
When through the thin stream I shall take my way,
Girt round with gold, and garlanded with may,
What rushing stream can keep us long alone?
The Youths.
O burning Sun, O master of unrest,
Why must we, toiling, cast away the best,
Now, when the bird sleeps by her empty nest?

See, with my garland lying at her feet,
In lonely labour stands mine own, my sweet,
Above the quern half-filled with half-ground wheat.
O red taskmaster, that thy flames were done!
The Maidens.
O love, to-night across the half-shorn plain
Shall I not go to meet the yellow wain,
A look of love at end of toil to gain?
What flaming sun can keep us long alone?
The Youths.
To-morrow, said I, is grape gathering o'er;
To-morrow, and our loves are twinned no more.
To-morrow came, to bring us woe and war.

What have I done, that I should stand with these
Hearkening the dread shouts borne upon the breeze,
While she, far off, sits weeping 'neath her trees?
Alas, O kings, what is it ye have done?

The Maidens.
Come, love, delay not; come, and slay my dread!
Already is the banquet table spread;
In the cool chamber flower-strewn is my bed:
Come, love, what king shall keep us long alone?
The Youths.
O city, city, open thou thy gate!
See, with life snatched from out the hand of fate!
How on thy glittering triumph I must wait!

Are not her hands stretched out to me? Her eyes,
Grow they not weary as each new hope dies,
And lone before her still the long road lies?
O golden city, fain would I be gone!
The Maidens.
And thou art happy, amid shouts and songs,
And all that unto conquering men belongs.
Night hath no fear for me, and day no wrongs.
What brazen city gates can keep us, lone?
The Youths.
O long, long road, how bare thou art, and grey!
Hill after hill thou climbest, and the day
Is ended now, O moonlit endless way!

And she is standing where the rushes grow,
And still with white hand shades her anxious brow,
Though 'neath the world the sun is fallen now,
O dreary road, when will thy leagues be done?

The Maidens.
O tremblest thou, grey road, or do my feet
Tremble with joy, thy flinty face to meet?
Because my love's eyes soon mine eyes shall greet?
No heart thou hast to keep us long alone.
The Youths.
O wilt thou ne'er depart, thou heavy night?
When will thy slaying bring on the morning bright,
That leads my weary feet to my delight?

Why lingerest thou, filling with wandering fears
My lone love's tired heart; her eyes with tears
For thoughts like sorrow for the vanished years?
Weaver of ill thoughts, when wilt thou be gone?
The Maidens.
Love, to the east are thine eyes turned as mine,
In patient watching for the night's decline?
And hast thou noted this grey widening line?
Can any darkness keep us long alone?
The Youths.
O day, O day, is it a little thing
That thou so long unto thy life must cling,
Because I gave thee such a welcoming?

I called thee king of all felicity,
I praised thee that thou broughtest joy so nigh;
Thine hours are turned to years, thou wilt not die;
O day so longed for, would that thou wert gone!

The Maidens.

The light fails, love; the long day soon shall be
Nought but a pensive happy memory
Blessed for the tales it told to thee and me.
How hard it was, O love, to be alone.

HAPLESS LOVE.

HIC.

Why do you sadly go alone,
O fair friend? Are your pigeons flown,
Or has the thunder killed your bees,
Or he-goats barked your apple-trees?
Or has the red-eared bull gone mad,
Or the mead turned from good to bad?
Or did you find the merchant lied
About the gay cloth scarlet-dyed?
And did he sell you brass for gold,
Or is there murrain in the fold?

ILLE.

Nay, no such thing has come to me.
In bird and beast and field and tree,
And all the things that make my store,
Am I as rich as e'er before;
And no beguilers have I known
But Love and Death; and Love is gone,
Therefore am I far more than sad,
And no more know good things from bad.

HIC.

Woe worth the while! Yet coming days
May bring another, good to praise.

ILLE.

Nay, never will I love again,
For loving is but joyful pain
If all be at its very best;
A rose-hung bower of all unrest;
But when at last things go awry,
What tongue can tell its misery?
And soon or late shall this befall—
The gods send death upon us all.

HIC.

Nay, then, but tell me how she died,
And how it did to thee betide
To love her; for the wise men say
To talk of grief drives grief away.

ILLE.

Alas, O friend, it happed to me
To see her passing daintily
Before my homestead day by day.
Would she had gone some other way:
For one day, as she rested there
Beneath the long-leaved chestnuts fair,
In very midst of mid-day heat,
I cast myself before her feet,
And prayed for pity and for love.

How could I dream that words could move
A woman? Soft she looked at me;
"Thou sayest that I a queen should be,"
She answered with a gathering smile;
"Well, I will wait a little while;
Perchance the gods thy will have heard."

And even with that latest word,
The clash of arms we heard anigh;
And from the wood rode presently
A fair knight well apparelled.
And even as she turned her head,
He shortened rein, and cried aloud —
"O beautiful, among the crowd
Of queens thou art the queen of all!"

But when she let her eyelids fall,
And blushed for pleasure, and for shame,
Then quickly to her feet he came,
And said, "Thou shalt be queen indeed;
For many a man this day shall bleed
Because of me, and leave me king
Ere noontide fall to evening."

Then on his horse he set the maid
Before him, and no word she said
Clear unto me, but murmuring
Beneath her breath some gentle thing,
She clung unto him lovingly;
Nor took they any heed of me.

Through shade and sunlight on they rode,
But 'neath the green boughs I abode,
Nor noted aught that might betide.
The sun waned, and the shade spread wide;
The birds came twittering over head;
But there I lay as one long dead.

But ere the sunset, came a rout
Of men-at-arms with song and shout,
And bands of lusty archers tall,
And spearmen marching like a wall,
Their banners hanging heavily,
That no man might their blazon see;
And ere their last noise died away,
I heard the clamour of the fray
That swelled, and died, and rose again;
Yet still I brooded o'er my pain
Until the red sun nigh was set,
And then methought I e'en might get
The rest I sought, nor wake forlorn
Midst fellow men the morrow morn;
So forth I went unto the field,
One man without a sword or shield.

But none was there to give me rest,
Tried was it who was worst and best,
And slain men lay on every side;
For flight and chase were turned aside,

And all men got on toward the sea;
But as I went right heavily
I saw how close beside the way
Over a knight a woman lay
Lamenting, and I knew in sooth
My love, and drew a-near for ruth.

There lay the knight who would be king
Dead slain before the evening,
And ever my love cried out and said,
"O sweet, in one hour art thou dead
And I am but a maiden still!
The gods this day have had their will
Of thee and me; whom all these years
They kept apart; that now with tears
And blood and bitter misery
Our parting and our death might be."

Then did she rise and look around,
And took his drawn sword from the ground
And on its bitter point she fell—
No more, no more, O friend, to tell!
No more about my life, O friend!
One course it shall have to the end.

O Love, come from the shadowy shore,
And by my homestead as before,
Go by with sunlight on thy feet!
Come back, if but to mock me, sweet!

HIC.

O fool! what love of thine was this,
Who never gave thee any kiss,
Nor would have wept if thou hadst died?
Go now, behold the world is wide.
Soon shalt thou find some dainty maid
To sit with in thy chestnut shade,
To rear fair children up for thee,
As those few days pass silently,
Uncounted, that may yet remain
'Twixt thee and that last certain pain.

ILLE.

Art thou a God? Nay, if thou wert,
Wouldst thou belike know of my hurt,
And what might sting and what might heal?
The world goes by 'twixt woe and weal
And heeds me not; I sit apart
Amid old memories. To my heart
My love and sorrow must I press;
It knoweth its own bitterness.

THE FIRST FORAY OF ARISTOMENES.

The following is a fragment of a poem, called 'The Story of Aristomenes.' Aristomenes, the son of one of the Messenian exiles, settled in Arcadia, when about nineteen years of age, happens to be wandering by the sources of the Alpheus with a few other Messenian exiles, and is told by some Arcadian shepherds that on the other side of the mountains lay the rich valley of the Eurotas. Aristomenes urges his companions to make a raid into Laconia, avenge the wrongs of their fathers, and raises a revolt in Messenia. Roused by his words, they set out:—

On toiled the sons of the exiles up the steep,
And early that same night were laid asleep
Far down the southern slope; then with the day
Rose up and gazed adown, and there it lay,
The land that bred their tyrants; homestead fair,
Pasture and wood and cornland gathered there
About the hid Eurotas: orderly
And rich seemed all; and these were young to die,
Yet young to think of dying or of fear,
Or what the slow revenge of time might bear.

So downward went the youths, till the slopes grew
Wooded and tilled, and here and there a few

Of early-stirring folk they met, who fled,
As though Arcadian hill-thieves they did dread;
But none made question to them, till at noon,
They passed an oak-wood heavy with the June,
And came upon a great man's house, whereby
There stood the shrine of some divinity:
Plenteous the place was, orchard, garden-close,
Rick-yard and barn spread round, and high o'er those
The pillared house, through whose court-gates flung wide
Came sound of folk at meal in hot noontide.
Great looked the place and lordly, the young men
Gazed each on each, and certainly by then
The morn's vague rashness had grown somewhat dull;
Poor seemed they in a place so plentiful,
Beardless and light-limbed by the ponderous gate.
But in their leader did their heart wax great;
Fair visions passed before him, as he said,
Like one who knew their thoughts:
"Let nought be weighed,
But all be dared to-day!—time later on,
When with the Gods' help great things we have won,
Will we be wise: not hard now to be brave,
For in each Spartan house good friends we have,—
If not our kin, yet foes of our kin's foes;
And this shall be no woeful day to those—
Men torn from home and fair life, having nought
Save the one hope to vengeance to be brought.
No words, but follow swift unto the hall!"

Into the court they passed then; down did fall
The brazen jar from off a maiden's head,
And flashed in the hot sun; a boy who led
A horse from hall to stable stopped and stared,
And durst not flee, while restless, unafeared,
The lustred doves before their swift feet brushed,
The peacock 'twixt the close-set yew-stems pushed;
Nought looked like war, as all doors round about
The band beset. But tumult and great doubt
Rose in the hall, when in the doorway there
Stood Aristomenes, his golden hair
Bright with the sun, and through the locks of it
Might men behold the noonday sunbeams flit
From spear to spear behind; great fear fell then
Upon those half-armed and unwary men,
Till over all his loud clear voice was heard.

"Men in this hall, be ye no more afeared
Than if the Gods, who sent us here, were come!
Behold, we have a will to get us home
Unto Messenia; from the Arcadian land
We come last, bearing little wealth in hand,
For ye Laconian folk our stewards are made
This many a year: so when ye down have laid
The increase of our own store, harmless we
Will go our ways; who yet this side the sea,
Yea in our fathers' fields, have mind to dwell;
Moreover on this day methinks 'twere well

If here abide perchance folk of our kin,
Or strangers, who have found it hard to win
From out this house, that with this company
They now should wend more fields of Greece to see.
— Nay, let your weapons be! — we are enough
To slay all here, if once the play wax rough;
Take life, and meet us on another day!
And whoso goeth to Sparta, let him say
That Aristomenes his eyes have seen,
Wending his way to what of old hath been
A happy land, that either he may live
Some joy to folk downtrodden there to give,
Or at the least die not without good fame!
— Now master of this house, speak forth thy name,
And once more, if here be Messenian folk,
Or strangers bowed down 'neath the Spartan yoke
Now let them come with us, either to die
As the Gods meant them, or live happily!"

A sullen hush, mid scowl of angry brows
And clenching of hard hands; and then uprose
Glad clamour from the many bondmen there,
'Gainst whom the Spartans not a stroke might dare.
Then spake the master of the house:
"O youth,
Beardless, unknown thou art; and yet in sooth
One good day hast thou won in thy life days,
While I, Cleombrotus, must lose the praise

That once I had, of being victorious.
— But you, scourged slaves, get forth from this my house,
Where no more meat ye gorge from this day forth.
Dogs bought with money! beasts of little worth,
Dragged from our fee-farm of Messenia, go,
Lest ye to morn the stocks and whipcord know!
— Take them, bold youth, and blame thyself, when they
From the first clash of steel shall flee away.
But for my wealth, if thou indeed take all,
Thou takest not more than the Gods one day shall.
Lo, thou, my daughter! wilt thou take her then?
One day I deem she shall bear warlike men
To fail at last, and come to misery!"

And as he spake he drew forth from his knee
A growing maiden, some twelve winters old,
Who with great eyes the stranger did behold,
Trembling, and clinging to her father's knees,
Who smiled upon her. Aristomenes
Would fain have spoken, and a threatening sound
Rose from the slaves, who gathered close around;
But the Lord cried:
"Thou hast begun a war,
Knowing but little who thy foemen are;
And if thou thinkest thou hast gained great things
This day from me, the seed and friend of kings,
Yet shalt thou think ere thou hast gained the end
How many joys thou from the world didst send,
— My joy the first, and thine perchance the last."

Therewith back to the wall behind he cast
His right hand suddenly, and caught adown
A hunting knife, thin-bladed, sharp, and brown,
And to his own heart thrust it with sure stroke,
And fell down dead and silent, from the folk
A mingled murmur rose, and pale and wan
The little one stood gazing on the man
Greater than was the greatest man she knew.
But Aristomenes unto him drew,
Smiling, but pale and somewhat sick at heart,
And said:

"In brave wise has he played his part,
Yet better had he lived to hinder ours!
But go, ye freed Messenians, to the bowers
Where arms are stored, and raiment and good grain;
And gather from the home-fields the best gain
Of neat and sheep and horses, nor delay
Our setting forth three hours; because this day
I fain would tread on the Messenian soil.
But here shall sit these Spartans free from toil
Till we are on our way."

So here and there
Ransacked the slaves just freed, of whom there were
Some thirty men; but the Messenians stayed,
Guarding the sullen home-folk: the young maid
Stood by her mother and some women, late
Come from their chambers in most sad estate,
And she wept too; but mid her sobs, no less

Gazed on the strange and new-born stateliness
Of the rough-clad Messenian, as he passed
To and fro through the hall.
And so at last
In the very hottest of that day of June,
While the great brazen trumpets' clattering tune,
And clash of arms broke through the drowsy hum
Of scarce-seen things of summer, did they come
Into the court yard, armed now gloriously,
All save their leader; therewith could they see
Out in the highway waggons tilted o'er
The victuals and the goodly things that bore,
And further on steeds, sheep, and lowing neat.
Forth went they joyous; yet with lingering feet
Out of the hall passed Aristomenes,
Half sad at heart, the very last of these,
And as he passed the sun scorched threshold o'er,
Still were the maiden's eyes upon the door,
And she forgat to weep till he was gone.

WINTER WEATHER.

We rode together
In the winter weather
To the broad mead under the hill;
Though the skies did shiver
With the cold, the river
Ran, and was never still.

No cloud did darken
The night; we did hearken
The hound's bark far away.
It was solemn midnight
In that dread, dread night,
In the years that have pass'd for aye.

Two rode beside me,
My banner did hide me,
As it droop'd adown from my lance;
With its deep blue trapping,
The mail over-lapping,
My gallant horse did prance.

So ever together
In the sparkling weather
Moved my banner and lance;
And its laurel trapping,
The steel over-lapping,
The stars saw quiver and dance.

We met together
In the winter weather
  By the town-walls under the hill;
His mail-rings came clinking,
They broke on my thinking,
  For the night was hush'd and still.

Two rode beside him,
His banner did hide him,
  As it droop'd down strait from his lance;
With its blood-red trapping,
The mail over-lapping,
  His mighty horse did prance.

And ever together
In the solemn weather
  Moved his banner and lance;
And the holly trapping,
The steel over-lapping,
  Did shimmer and shiver, and dance.

Back reined the squires
Till they saw the spires
  Over the city wall;
Ten fathoms between us,
No dames could have seen us,
  Tilt from the city wall.

There we sat upright
Till the full midnight
  Should be told from the city chimes:
Sharp from the towers
Leapt forth the showers
  Of the many clanging rhymes.

'Twas the midnight hour,
Deep from the tower
  Boom'd the following bell;
Down go our lances,
Shout for the lances!
  The last toll was his knell.

There he lay, dying;
He had, for his lying,
  A spear in his traitorous mouth;
A false tale made he
Of my true, true lady;
  But the spear went through his mouth.

In the winter weather
We rode back together
  From the broad mead under the hill;
And the cock sung his warning
As it grew toward morning,
  But the far-off hound was still.

Black grew his tower
As we rode down lower,
  Black from the barren hill;
And our horses strode
Up the winding road
  To the gateway dim and still.

At the gate of his tower,
In the quiet hour,
  We laid his body there;
But his helmet broken,
We took as a token;
  Shout for my lady fair!

We rode back together
In the winter weather
  From the broad mead under the hill;
No cloud did darken
The night; we did hearken
  How the hound bay'd from the hill.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

THE publishers of THE BOOKMAN are able to announce that, in addition to the other attractions which it will present to its readers in the coming year (the fifth of its existence), they have secured a Serial Story of the time of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION,

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The Bibelot

Æsthetic Poetry, written by Walter Pater in 1868, was not published until the first edition of Appreciations with an Essay on Style *appeared in 1889. In the second edition of* Appreciations (*1890*), *and in all later re-issues, a paper on* Feuillet's "La Morte" *takes the place of* Æsthetic Poetry. *Try as we may it is difficult to see why those of us who came late into the knowledge of Pater should be deprived of this splendid piece of imaginative criticism.*

That it and the Rossetti[1] *article are inseparably connected is very certain; taken together they constituted an organic whole.*

One must read Æsthetic Poetry *to realize just what was the unique graft upon English literature conferred by William Morris. It is the most subtly interpretive of all judgments upon his poetry, not even excepting Swinburne's magnificent meed of praise. As a prose introduction to the cycle of* The Earthly Paradise *it cannot be surpassed.*

---

1 *The critique on Rossetti dates from 1883, and previous to its appearance in* Appreciations *had been printed in T. H. Ward's* English Poets.

And this same method when applied to eliciting Rossetti's supreme gifts is fully as essential to our appreciation of him. *Compare the banal Philistinism of* The Fleshly School of Poetry *and see of how little worth as criticism is that most wretched attempt to mete out pains and penalties to a genius of the first order!*

Ah, if Pater had lived to accomplish what Mr. W. M. Rossetti so honestly but ineffectually tried to do![2] *We should now possess, it may be, a commentary on* The House of Life *unequalled for insight. As it is the delicate analysis of this one essay is all that remains to us.*

---

2 *See* Dante Gabriel Rossetti as Designer and Writer: *Notes by W. M. Rossetti including a Prose Paraphrase of The House of Life. London, 1889.*

FOR NOVEMBER:

OUR LADY'S TUMBLER:
A TWELFTH CENTURY LEGEND,
Translated by
P. H. WICKSTEED.

TWO APPRECIATIONS:

I. ÆSTHETIC POETRY,
II. DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI,

BY WALTER PATER.

I.

ÆSTHETIC POETRY.

THE "æsthetic" poetry is neither a mere reproduction of Greek or medieval poetry, nor only an idealisation of modern life and sentiment. The atmosphere on which its effect depends belongs to no simple form of poetry, no actual form of life. Greek poetry, medieval or modern poetry, projects, above the realities of its time, a world in which the forms of things are transfigured. Of that transfigured world this new poetry takes possession, and sublimates beyond it another still fainter and more spectral, which is literally an artificial or "earthly paradise." It is a finer ideal, extracted from what in relation to any actual world is already an ideal. Like some strange second flowering after date, it renews on a more delicate type the poetry of a past age, but must not be confounded with it. The secret of the enjoyment of it is that inversion of home-sickness known to some, that incurable thirst for the sense of escape, which no actual form of life satisfies, no poetry even, if it be merely simple and spontaneous.

The writings of the "romantic school," of which the æsthetic poetry is an afterthought, mark a transition not so much from the pagan to the medieval ideal, as from a lower to a higher degree of passion in literature. The end of the eighteenth century, swept by vast disturbing currents, experienced an excitement of spirit of which one note was a reaction against an outworn classicism severed not more from nature than from the genuine motives of ancient art; and a return to true Hellenism was as much a part of this reaction as the sudden preoccupation with things medieval. The medieval tendency is in Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*, the Hellenic in his *Iphigenie*. At first this medievalism was superficial, or at least external. Adventure, romance in the frankest sense, grotesque individualism — that is one element in medieval poetry, and with it alone Scott and Goethe dealt. Beyond them were the two other elements of the medieval spirit: its mystic religion at its apex in Dante and Saint Louis, and its mystic passion, passing here and there into the great romantic loves of rebellious flesh, of Lancelot and Abelard. That stricter, imaginative medie-

valism which re-creates the mind of the Middle Age, so that the form, the presentment grows outward from within, came later with Victor Hugo in France, with Heine in Germany.

In the *Defence of Guenevere: and Other Poems*, published by Mr. William Morris now many years ago, the first typical specimen of æsthetic poetry, we have a refinement upon this later, profounder medievalism. The poem which gives its name to the volume is a thing tormented and awry with passion, like the body of Guenevere defending herself from the charge of adultery, and the accent falls in strange, unwonted places with the effect of a great cry. In truth these Arthurian legends, in their origin prior to Christianity, yield all their sweetness only in a Christian atmosphere. What is characteristic in them is the strange suggestion of a deliberate choice between Christ and a rival lover. That religion, monastic religion at any rate, has its sensuous side, a dangerously sensuous side, has been often seen: it is the experience of Rousseau as well as of the Christian mystics. The Christianity of the Middle Age made way among a people whose loss

was in the life of the senses partly by its æsthetic beauty, a thing so profoundly felt by the Latin hymn-writers, who for one moral or spiritual sentiment have a hundred sensuous images. And so in those imaginative loves, in their highest expression, the Provençal poetry, it is a rival religion with a new rival *cultus* that we see. Coloured through and through with Christian sentiment, they are rebels against it. The rejection of one worship for another is never lost sight of. The jealousy of that other lover, for whom these words and images and refined ways of sentiment were first devised, is the secret here of a borrowed, perhaps factitious colour and heat. It is the mood of the cloister taking a new direction, and winning so a later space of life it never anticipated.

Hereon, as before in the cloister, so now in the *château*, the reign of reverie set in. The devotion of the cloister knew that mood thoroughly, and had sounded all its stops. For the object of this devotion was absent or veiled, not limited to one supreme plastic form like Zeus at Olympia or Athena in the Acropolis, but distracted, as in a fever dream, into a thousand symbols and reflections.

But then, the Church, that new Sibyl, had a thousand secrets to make the absent near. Into this kingdom of reverie, and with it into a paradise of ambitious refinements, the earthly love enters, and becomes a prolonged somnambulism. Of religion it learns the art of directing towards an unseen object sentiments whose natural direction is towards objects of sense. Hence a love defined by the absence of the beloved, choosing to be without hope, protesting against all lower uses of love, barren, extravagant, antinomian. It is the love which is incompatible with marriage, for the chevalier who never comes, of the serf for the *châtelaine*, of the rose for the nightingale, of Rudel for the Lady of Tripoli. Another element of extravagance came in with the feudal spirit: Provençal love is full of the very forms of vassalage. To be the servant of love, to have offended, to taste the subtle luxury of chastisement, of reconciliation — the religious spirit, too, knows that, and meets just there, as in Rousseau, the delicacies of the earthly love. Here, under this strange complex of conditions, as in some medicated air, exotic flowers of sentiment expand, among people of a

remote and unaccustomed beauty, somnambulistic, frail, androgynous, the light almost shining through them. Surely, such loves were too fragile and adventurous to last more than for a moment.

That monastic religion of the Middle Age was, in fact, in many of its bearings, like a beautiful disease or disorder of the senses: and a religion which is a disorder of the senses must always be subject to illusions. Reverie, illusion, delirium: they are the three stages of a fatal descent both in the religion and the loves of the Middle Age. Nowhere has the impression of this delirium been conveyed as by Victor Hugo in *Notre Dame de Paris*. The strangest creations of sleep seem here, by some appalling licence, to cross the limit of the dawn. The English poet too has learned the secret. He has diffused through *King Arthur's Tomb* the maddening white glare of the sun, and tyranny of the moon, not tender and far-off, but close down — the sorcerer's moon, large and feverish. The colouring is intricate and delirious, as of "scarlet lilies." The influence of summer is like a poison in one's blood, with a sudden bewildered sickening of life

and all things. In *Galahad: a Mystery*, the frost of Christmas night on the chapel stones acts as a strong narcotic: a sudden shrill ringing pierces through the numbness: a voice proclaims that the Grail has gone forth through the great forest. It is in the *Blue Closet* that this delirium reaches its height with a singular beauty, reserved perhaps for the enjoyment of the few.

A passion of which the outlets are sealed, begets a tension of nerve, in which the sensible world comes to one with a reinforced brilliancy and relief — all redness is turned into blood, all water into tears. Hence a wild, convulsed sensuousness in the poetry of the Middle Age, in which the things of nature begin to play a strange delirious part. Of the things of nature the medieval mind had a deep sense; but its sense of them was not objective, no real escape to the world without us. The aspects and motions of nature only reinforced its prevailing mood, and were in conspiracy with one's own brain against one. A single sentiment invaded the world: everything was infused with a motive drawn from the soul. The amorous poetry of Provence, making the starling and

the swallow its messengers, illustrates the whole attitude of nature in this electric atmosphere, bent as by miracle or magic to the service of human passion.

The most popular and gracious form of Provençal poetry was the *nocturn*, sung by the lover at night at the door or under the window of his mistress. These songs were of different kinds, according to the hour at which they were intended to be sung. Some were to be sung at midnight — songs inviting to sleep, the *serena*, or *serenade;* others at break of day — waking songs, the *aube* or *aubade*.[1] This waking-song is put sometimes into the mouth of a comrade of the lover, who plays sentinel during the night, to watch for and announce the dawn: sometimes into the mouth of one of the lovers, who are about to separate. A modification of it is familiar to us all in *Romeo and Juliet*, where the lovers debate whether the song they hear is of the nightingale or the lark; the aubade, with the two other great forms of love-poetry then floating in the world, the sonnet and the epithalamium, being here

1 Fauriel's *Histoire de la Poésie Provençale*, tome ii. ch. xviii.

refined, heightened, and inwoven into the structure of the play. Those, in whom what Rousseau calls *les frayeurs nocturnes* are constitutional, know what splendour they give to the things of the morning; and how there comes something of relief from physical pain with the first white film in the sky. The Middle Age knew those terrors in all their forms; and these songs of the morning win hence a strange tenderness and effect. The crown of the English poet's book is one of these appreciations of the dawn:—

"Pray but one prayer for me 'twixt thy closed lips,
Think but one thought of me up in the stars.
The summer-night waneth, the morning light slips,
Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the aspen,
betwixt the cloud-bars,
That are patiently waiting there for the dawn:
Patient and colourless, though Heaven's gold
Waits to float through them along with the sun.
Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy elms wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises; the roses are dun;
Through the long twilight they pray for the dawn,
Round the lone house in the midst of the corn.
Speak but one word to me over the corn,
Over the tender, bow'd locks of the corn."

It is the very soul of the bridegroom which goes forth to the bride: inanimate things are

longing with him: all the sweetness of the imaginative loves of the Middle Age, with a superadded spirituality of touch all its own, is in that!

The *Defence of Guenevere* was published in 1858; the *Life and Death of Jason* in 1867; to be followed by *The Earthly Paradise;* and the change of manner wrought in the interval, entire, almost a revolt, is characteristic of the æsthetic poetry. Here there is no delirium or illusion, no experiences of mere soul while the body and the bodily senses sleep, or wake with convulsed intensity at the prompting of imaginative love; but rather the great primary passions under broad daylight as of the pagan Veronese. This simplification interests us, not merely for the sake of an individual poet — full of charm as he is — but chiefly because it explains through him a transition which, under many forms, is one law of the life of the human spirit, and of which what we call the Renaissance is only a supreme instance. Just so the monk in his cloister, through the "open vision," open only to the spirit, divined, aspired to, and at last apprehended,

a better daylight, but earthly, open only to the senses. Complex and subtle interests, which the mind spins for itself may occupy art and poetry or our own spirits for a time; but sooner or later they come back with a sharp rebound to the simple elementary passions — anger, desire, regret, pity, and fear: and what corresponds to them in the sensuous world — bare, abstract fire, water, air, tears, sleep, silence, and what De Quincey has called the "glory of motion."

This reaction from dreamlight to daylight gives, as always happens, a strange power in dealing with morning and the things of the morning. Not less is this Hellenist of the Middle Age master of dreams, of sleep and the desire of sleep — sleep in which no one walks, restorer of childhood to men — dreams, not like Galahad's or Guenevere's, but full of happy, childish wonder as in the earlier world. It is a world in which the centaur and the ram with the fleece of gold are conceivable. The song sung always claims to be sung for the first time. There are hints at a language common to birds and beasts and men. Everywhere there is an impression of surprise, as of people first

waking from the golden age, at fire, snow, wine, the touch of water as one swims, the salt taste of the sea. And this simplicity at first hand is a strange contrast to the sought-out simplicity of Wordsworth. Desire here is towards the body of nature for its own sake, not because a soul is divined through it.

And yet it is one of the charming anachronisms of a poet, who, while he handles an ancient subject, never becomes an antiquarian, but animates his subject by keeping it always close to himself, that betweenwhiles we have a sense of English scenery as from an eye well practised under Wordsworth's influence, as from "the casement half opened on summer-nights," with the song of the brown bird among the willows, the

> "Noise of bells, such as in moonlit lanes
> Rings from the grey team on the market night."

Nowhere but in England is there such a "paradise of birds," the fern-owl, the water-hen, the thrush in a hundred sweet variations, the ger-falcon, the kestrel, the starling, the pea-fowl; birds heard from the field by the townsman down in the streets at dawn; doves everywhere, pink-footed, grey-winged,

flitting about the temple, troubled by the temple incense, trapped in the snow. The sea-touches are not less sharp and firm, surest of effect in places where river and sea, salt and fresh waves, conflict.

In handling a subject of Greek legend, anything in the way of an actual revival must always be impossible. Such vain antiquarianism is a waste of the poet's power. The composite experience of all the ages is part of each one of us: to deduct from that experience, to obliterate any part of it, to come face to face with the people of a past age, as if the Middle Age, the Renaissance, the eighteenth century had not been, is as impossible as to become a little child, or enter again into the womb and be born. But though it is not possible to repress a single phase of that humanity, which, because we live and move and have our being in the life of humanity, makes us what we are, it is possible to isolate such a phase, to throw it into relief, to be divided against ourselves in zeal for it; as we may hark back to some choice space of our own individual life. We cannot truly conceive the age: we can conceive the element it has contributed to our

culture: we can treat the subjects of the age bringing that into relief. Such an attitude towards Greece, aspiring to but never actually reaching its way of conceiving life, is what is possible for art.

The modern poet or artist who treats in this way a classical story comes very near, if not to the Hellenism of Homer, yet to the Hellenism of Chaucer, the Hellenism of the Middle Age, or rather of that exquisite first period of the Renaissance within it. Afterwards the Renaissance takes its side, becomes, perhaps, exaggerated or facile. But the choice life of the human spirit is always under mixed lights, and in mixed situations, when it is not too sure of itself, is still expectant, girt up to leap forward to the promise. Such a situation there was in that earliest return from the overwrought spiritualities of the Middle Age to the earlier, more ancient life of the senses; and for us the most attractive form of classical story is the monk's conception of it, when he escapes from the sombre atmosphere of his cloister to natural light. The fruits of this mood, which, divining more than it understands, infuses into the scenery and figures of Chris-

tian history some subtle reminiscence of older gods, or into the story of Cupid and Psyche that passionate stress of spirit which the world owes to Christianity, constitute a peculiar vein of interest in the art of the fifteenth century.

And so, before we leave *Jason* and *The Earthly Paradise*, a word must be said about their medievalisms, delicate inconsistencies, which, coming in a poem of Greek subject, bring into this white dawn thoughts of the delirious night just over and make one's sense of relief deeper. The opening of the fourth book of *Jason* describes the embarkation of the Argonauts: as in a dream, the scene shifts and we go down from Iolchos to the sea through a pageant of the Middle Age in some French or Italian town. The gilded vanes on the spires, the bells ringing in the towers, the trellis of roses at the window, the close planted with apple-trees, the grotesque undercroft with its close-set pillars, change by a single touch the air of these Greek cities and we are at Glastonbury by the tomb of Arthur. The nymph in furred raiment who seduces Hylas is conceived frankly in the spirit of Teutonic romance;

her song is of a garden enclosed, such as that with which the old church glass-stainer surrounds the mystic bride of the song of songs. Medea herself has a hundred touches of the medieval sorceress, the sorceress of the Streckelberg or the Blocksberg: her mystic changes are Christabel's. It is precisely this effect, this grace of Hellenism relieved against the sorrow of the Middle Age, which forms the chief motive of *The Earthly Paradise:* with an exquisite dexterity the two threads of sentiment are here interwoven and contrasted. A band of adventurers sets out from Norway, most northerly of northern lands, where the plague is raging — the bell continually ringing as they carry the Sacrament to the sick. Even in Mr. Morris's earliest poems snatches of the sweet French tongue had always come with something of Hellenic blitheness and grace. And now it is below the very coast of France, through the fleet of Edward the Third, among the gaily painted medieval sails, that we pass to a reserved fragment of Greece, which by some divine good fortune lingers on in the western sea into the Middle Age. There the stories of *The Earthly*

Paradise are told, Greek story and romantic alternating; and for the crew of the *Rose Garland*, coming across the sins of the earlier world with the sign of the cross, and drinking Rhine-wine in Greece, the two worlds of sentiment are confronted.

One characteristic of the pagan spirit the æsthetic poetry has, which is on its surface — the continual suggestion, pensive or passionate, of the shortness of life. This is contrasted with the bloom of the world, and gives new seduction to it — the sense of death and the desire of beauty: the desire of beauty quickened by the sense of death. But that complexion of sentiment is at its height in another "æsthetic" poet of whom I have to speak next, Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

1868.

II.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

IT was characteristic of a poet who had ever something about him of mystic isolation, and will still appeal perhaps, though with a name it may seem now established in English literature, to a special and limited audience, that some of his poems had won a kind of exquisite fame before they were in the full sense published. *The Blessed Damozel*, although actually printed twice before the year 1870, was eagerly circulated in manuscript; and the volume which it now opens came at last to satisfy a long-standing curiosity as to the poet, whose pictures also had become an object of the same peculiar kind of interest. For those poems were the work of a painter, understood to belong to, and to be indeed the leader, of a new school then rising into note; and the reader of to-day may observe already, in *The Blessed Damozel*, written at the age of eighteen, a prefigurement of the chief characteristics of that school, as he will recognise in it also, in proportion as he really knows Rossetti, many of the char-

acteristics which are most markedly personal and his own. Common to that school and to him, and in both alike of primary significance, was the quality of sincerity, already felt as one of the charms of that earliest poem — a perfect sincerity, taking effect in the deliberate use of the most direct and unconventional expression, for the conveyance of a poetic sense which recognised no conventional standard of what poetry was called upon to be. At a time when poetic originality in England might seem to have had its utmost play, here was certainly one new poet more, with a structure and music of verse, a vocabulary, an accent, unmistakably novel, yet felt to be no mere tricks of manner adopted with a view to forcing attention — an accent which might rather count as the very seal of reality on one man's own proper speech; as that speech itself was the wholly natural expression of certain wonderful things he really felt and saw. Here was one, who had a matter to present to his readers, to himself at least, in the first instance, so valuable, so real and definite, that his primary aim, as regards form or expression in his verse, would be but its

exact equivalence to those *data* within. That he had this gift of transparency in language — the control of a style which did but obediently shift and shape itself to the mental motion, as a well-trained hand can follow on the tracing-paper the outline of an original drawing below it, was proved afterwards by a volume of typically perfect translations from the delightful but difficult "early Italian poets": such transparency being indeed the secret of all genuine style, of all such style as can truly belong to one man and not to another. His own meaning was always personal and even recondite, in a certain sense learned and casuistical, sometimes complex or obscure; but the term was always, one could see, deliberately chosen from many competitors, as the just transcript of that peculiar phase of soul which he alone knew, precisely as he knew it.

One of the peculiarities of *The Blessed Damozel* was a definiteness of sensible imagery, which seemed almost grotesque to some, and was strange, above all, in a theme so profoundly visionary. The gold bar of heaven from which she leaned, her hair yellow like ripe corn, are but examples of a

general treatment, as naïvely detailed as the pictures of those early painters contemporary with Dante, who has shown a similar care for minute and definite imagery in his verse; there, too, in the very midst of profoundly mystic vision. Such definition of outline is indeed one among many points in which Rossetti resembles the great Italian poet, of whom, led to him at first by family circumstances, he was ever a lover — a "servant and singer," faithful as Dante, "of Florence and of Beatrice" — with some close inward conformities of genius also, independent of any mere circumstances of education. It was said by a critic of the last century, not wisely though agreeably to the practice of his time, that poetry rejoices in abstractions. For Rossetti, as for Dante, without question on his part, the first condition of the poetic way of seeing and presenting things is particularisation. "Tell me now," he writes, for Villon's

> "Dictes-moy où, n'en quel pays,
> Est Flora, la belle Romaine" —
>
> "Tell me now, in what hidden way is
> Lady Flora the lovely Roman:"

— "way," in which one might actually chance to meet her; the unmistakably poetic effect of the couplet in English being dependent on the definiteness of that single word (though actually lighted on in the search after a difficult double rhyme) for which every one else would have written, like Villon himself, a more general one, just equivalent to place or region.

And this delight in concrete definition is allied with another of his conformities to Dante, the really imaginative vividness, namely, of his personifications — his hold upon them, or rather their hold upon him, with the force of a Frankenstein, when once they have taken life from him. Not Death only and Sleep, for instance, and the winged spirit of Love, but certain particular aspects of them, a whole "populace" of special hours and places, "the hour" even "which might have been, yet might not be," are living creatures, with hands and eyes and articulate voices.

> "Stands it not by the door —
> Love's Hour — till she and I shall meet;
> With bodiless form and unapparent feet
> That cast no shadow yet before,

Though round its head the dawn begins to pour
The breath that makes day sweet?"—

"Nay, why
Name the dead hours? I mind them well:
Their ghosts in many darkened doorways dwell
With desolate eyes to know them by."

Poetry as a *mania*—one of Plato's two higher forms of "divine" mania—has, in all its species, a mere insanity incidental to it, the "defect of its quality," into which it may lapse in its moment of weakness; and the insanity which follows a vivid poetic anthropomorphism like that of Rossetti may be noted here and there in his work, in a forced and almost grotesque materialising of abstractions, as Dante also became at times a mere subject of the scholastic realism of the Middle Age.

In *Love's Nocturn* and *The Stream's Secret*, congruously perhaps with a certain feverishness of soul in the moods they present, there is at times a near approach (may it be said?) to such insanity of realism—

"Pity and love shall burn
In her pressed cheek and cherishing hands;
And from the living spirit of love that stands
Between her lips to soothe and yearn,

Each separate breath shall clasp me round in turn
And loose my spirit's bands."

But even if we concede this; even if we allow, in the very plan of those two compositions, something of the literary conceit — what exquisite, what novel flowers of poetry, we must admit them to be, as they stand! In the one, what a delight in all the natural beauty of water, all its details for the eye of a painter; in the other, how subtle and fine the imaginative hold upon all the secret ways of sleep and dreams! In both of them, with much the same attitude and tone, Love — sick and doubtful Love — would fain inquire of what lies below the surface of sleep, and below the water; stream or dream being forced to speak by Love's powerful "control"; and the poet would have it foretell the fortune, issue, and event of his wasting passion. Such artifices, indeed, were not unknown in the old Provençal poetry of which Dante had learned something. Only, in Rossetti at least, they are redeemed by a serious purpose, by that sincerity of his, which allies itself readily to a serious beauty, a sort of grandeur of literary workmanship, to a great style. One seems to hear there a really

new kind of poetic utterance, with effects which have nothing else like them; as there is nothing else, for instance, like the narrative of Jacob's Dream in *Genesis*, or Blake's design of the Singing of the Morning Stars, or Addison's Nineteenth Psalm.

With him indeed, as in some revival of the old mythopœic age, common things — dawn, noon, night — are full of human or personal expression, full of sentiment. The lovely little sceneries scattered up and down his poems, glimpses of a landscape, not indeed of broad open-air effects, but rather that of a painter concentrated upon the picturesque effect of one or two selected objects at a time — the "hollow brimmed with mist," or the "ruined weir," as he sees it from one of the windows, or reflected in one of the mirrors of his "house of life" (the vignettes for instance seen by Rose Mary in the magic beryl) attest, by their very freshness and simplicity, to a pictorial or descriptive power in dealing with the inanimate world, which is certainly also one half of the charm, in that other, more remote and mystic, use of it. For with Rossetti this sense of lifeless nature after all, is translated to a higher ser-

vice, in which it does but incorporate itself with some phase of strong emotion. Every one understands how this may happen at critical moments of life; what a weirdly expressive soul may have crept, even in full noonday, into "the white-flower'd elder-thicket," when Godiva saw it "gleam through the Gothic archways in the wall," at the end of her terrible ride. To Rossetti it is so always, because to him life is a crisis at every moment. A sustained impressibility towards the mysterious conditions of man's everyday life, towards the very mystery itself in it, gives a singular gravity to all his work: those matters never became trite to him. But throughout, it is the ideal intensity of love — of love based upon a perfect yet peculiar type of physical or material beauty — which is enthroned in the midst of those mysterious powers; Youth and Death, Destiny and Fortune, Fame, Poetic Fame, Memory, Oblivion, and the like. Rossetti is one of those who, in the words of Mérimée, *se passionnent pour la passion*, one of Love's lovers.

And yet, again as with Dante, to speak of his ideal type of beauty as material, is partly

misleading. Spirit and matter, indeed, have been for the most part opposed, with a false contrast or antagonism, by schoolmen, whose artificial creation those abstractions really are. In our actual concrete experience, the two trains of phenomena which the words *matter* and *spirit* do but roughly distinguish, play inextricably into each other. Practically, the church of the Middle Age by its æsthetic worship, its sacramentalism, its real faith in the resurrection of the flesh, had set itself against that Manichean opposition of spirit and matter, and its results in men's way of taking life; and in this, Dante is the central representative of its spirit. To him, in the vehement and impassioned heat of his conceptions, the material and the spiritual are fused and blent: if the spiritual attains the definite visibility of a crystal, what is material loses its earthiness and impurity. And here again, by force of instinct, Rossetti is one with him. His chosen type of beauty is one,

> "Whose speech Truth knows not from her thought,
> Nor Love her body from her soul."

Like Dante, he knows no region of spirit

which shall not be sensuous also, or material. The shadowy world, which he realises so powerfully, has still the ways and houses, the land and water, the light and darkness, the fire and flowers, that had so much to do in the moulding of those bodily powers and aspects which counted for so large a part of the soul, here.

For Rossetti, then, the great affections of persons to each other, swayed and determined, in the case of his highly pictorial genius, mainly by that so-called material loveliness, formed the great undeniable reality in things, the solid resisting substance, in a world where all beside might be but shadow. The fortunes of those affections — of the great love so determined; its casuistries, its languor sometimes; above all, its sorrows; its fortunate or unfortunate collisions with those other great matters; how it looks, as the long day of life goes round, in the light and shadow of them: all this, conceived with an abundant imagination, and a deep, a philosophic, reflectiveness, is the matter of his verse, and especially of what he designed as his chief poetic work, "a work to be called *The House of Life*," towards

which the majority of his sonnets and songs were contributions.

The dwelling-place in which one finds oneself by chance or destiny, yet can partly fashion for oneself; never properly one's own at all, if it be changed too lightly; in which every object has its associations—the dim mirrors, the portraits, the lamps, the books, the hair-tresses of the dead and visionary magic crystals in the secret drawers, the names and words scratched on the windows, windows open upon prospects the saddest or the sweetest; the house one must quit, yet taking perhaps, how much of its quietly active light and colour along with us!—grown now to be a kind of raiment to one's body, as the body, according to Swedenborg, is but the raiment of the soul—under that image, the whole of Rossetti's work might count as a *House of Life*, of which he is but the "Interpreter." And it is a "haunted" house. A sense of power in love, defying distance, and those barriers which are so much more than physical distance, of unutterable desire penetrating into the world of sleep, however "lead-bound," was one of those anticipative notes obscurely

struck in *The Blessed Damozel*, and, in his later work, makes him speak sometimes almost like a believer in mesmerism. Dream-land, as we said, with its "phantoms of the body," deftly coming and going on love's service, is to him, in no mere fancy or figure of speech, a real country, a veritable expansion of, or addition to, our waking life; and he did well perhaps to wait carefully upon sleep, for the lack of it became mortal disease with him. One may even recognise a sort of morbid and over-hasty making-ready for death itself, which increases on him; thoughts concerning it, its imageries, coming with a frequency and importunity, in excess, one might think, of even the very saddest, quite wholesome wisdom.

And indeed the publication of his second volume of *Ballads and Sonnets* preceded his death by scarcely a twelvemonth. That volume bears witness to the reverse of any failure of power, or falling-off from his early standard of literary perfection, in every one of his then accustomed forms of poetry — the song, the sonnet, and the ballad. The newly printed sonnets, now completing the *House of Life*, certainly advanced beyond

those earlier ones, in clearness; his dramatic power in the ballad, was here at its height; while one monumental, gnomic piece, *Soothsay*, testifies, more clearly even than the *Nineveh* of his first volume, to the reflective force, the dry reason, always at work behind his imaginative creations, which at no time dispensed with a genuine intellectual structure. For in matters of pure reflection also, Rossetti maintained the painter's sensuous clearness of conception; and this has something to do with the capacity, largely illustrated by his ballads, of telling some red-hearted story of impassioned action with effect.

Have there, in very deed, been ages, in which the external conditions of poetry such as Rossetti's were of more spontaneous growth than in our own? The archaic side of Rossetti's work, his preferences in regard to earlier poetry, connect him with those who have certainly thought so, who fancied they could have breathed more largely in the age of Chaucer, or of Ronsard, in one of those ages, in the words of Stendhal—*ces siècles de passions où les âmes pouvaient se livrer franchement à la plus haute exaltation*,

quand les passions qui font la possibilité comme les sujets des beaux arts existaient. We may think, perhaps, that such old time as that has never really existed except in the fancy of poets; but it was to find it, that Rossetti turned so often from modern life to the chronicle of the past. Old Scotch history, perhaps beyond any other, is strong in the matter of heroic and vehement hatreds and love, the tragic Mary herself being but the perfect blossom of them; and it is from that history that Rossetti has taken the subjects of the two longer ballads of his second volume: of the three admirable ballads in it, *The King's Tragedy* (in which Rossetti has dexterously interwoven some relics of James's own exquisite early verse) reaching the highest level of dramatic success, and marking perfection, perhaps, in this kind of poetry; which, in the earlier volume, gave us, among other pieces, *Troy Town*, *Sister Helen*, and *Eden Bower*.

Like those earlier pieces, the ballads of the second volume bring with them the question of the poetic value of the "refrain"—

> "Eden bower's in flower:
> And O the bower and the hour!"

—and the like. Two of those ballads—*Troy Town* and *Eden Bower*, are terrible in theme; and the refrain serves, perhaps, to relieve their bold aim at the sentiment of terror. In *Sister Helen* again, the refrain has a real, and sustained purpose (being here duly varied also) and performs the part of a chorus, as the story proceeds. Yet even in these cases, whatever its effect may be in actual recitation, it may fairly be questioned, whether, to the mere reader their actual effect is not that of a positive interruption and drawback, at least in pieces so lengthy; and Rossetti himself, it would seem, came to think so, for in the shortest of his later ballads, *The White Ship*—that old true history of the generosity with which a youth, worthless in life, flung himself upon death—he was contented with a single utterance of the refrain, "given out" like the keynote or tune of a chant.

In *The King's Tragedy*, Rossetti has worked upon motive, broadly human (to adopt the phrase of popular criticism) such as one and all may realise. Rossetti, indeed, with all his self-concentration upon his own peculiar aim, by no means ignored those

general interests which are external to poetry as he conceived it; as he has shown here and there, in this poetic, as also in pictorial, work. It was but that, in a life to be shorter even than the average, he found enough to occupy him in the fulfilment of a task, plainly "given him to do." Perhaps, if one had to name a single composition of his to readers desiring to make acquaintance with him for the first time, one would select: *The King's Tragedy* — that poem so moving, so popularly dramatic, and lifelike. Notwithstanding this, his work, it must be conceded, certainly through no narrowness or egotism, but in the faithfulness of a true workman to a vocation so emphatic, was mainly of the esoteric order. But poetry, at all times, exercises two distinct functions: it may reveal, it may unveil to every eye, the ideal aspects of common things, after Gray's way (though Gray too, it is well to remember, seemed in his own day, seemed even to Johnson, obscure) or it may actually add to the number of motives poetic and uncommon in themselves, by the imaginative creation of things that are ideal from their very birth. Rossetti did something, something excellent,

of the former kind; but his characteristic, his really revealing work, lay in the adding to poetry of fresh poetic material, of a new order of phenomena, in the creation of a new ideal.

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OCTOBER NUMBER.

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The Bibelot

THIS quaint little tale is one of a multitude that have come down to us from mediæval French sources. It was first done into English in 1894 by the Rev. Philip H. Wicksteed whose translation we here reprint entire.[1] Difficult as it is to convey the charm of so slight a thing we cannot but feel that Mr. Wicksteed has successfully turned into Nineteenth Century speech the simple Old World diction of this diminutive story.

It cannot of course compare with the passionate utterances of the cante-fable we know as Aucassin and Nicolete. It has no touch that cleaves the thin faint air of dawn—no episode at all comparable with the famous speech of that old lover of Provence who declared that he would rather fare forth to Hades with the woman he

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1 Our Lady's Tumbler. A Twelfth Century Legend Transcribed for Lady Day. MDCCCXCIV. [*By P. H. Wicksteed.*] *Sq. 16mo. with Frontispiece and 2 illustrations by H. Granville Fell. (London, 1894.) Another and later version, (Boston, 1898), apparently owes its inception to the fact that the Wicksteed edition had gone out of print,—the sort of argument resorted to, one may suppose, by every would-be book-maker the world over!*

loved than remain separated from her in the company of the saints in Heaven. On the contrary there is no hint of love at all unless we consider the minstrel's rapturous adoration of the Mother of God a substitute for the vision of an Earthly Paradise vouchsafed Aucassin should he succeed in winning Nicolete.

This lack of human passion, however, is made up by the spiritual fervor of the poor mirth-maker who after all was perhaps nearer and dearer to the Middle Age heart than the more celebrated old-time lovers. At all events it is a legend well worth telling, and we present it to our readers believing that they will feel with us its archaic refinement. One can but think of the many argosies of rhyme sunken out of sight forevermore, while this brief chronicle has endured from a period at least coincident with the composition of The Canterbury Tales.

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Our Lady's Tumbler

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NOTE:—The text of this Legend, in French of the end of the Twelfth Century, was published by Foerster in the "Romania," Vol. II., 1872, from a MS. in the Arsenal. Nothing is known of its origin. Gröber published the variants of two other MSS. in the "Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie" for 1880. The Transcriber has occasionally availed himself of these alternative readings. The Legend is written in lines of eight syllables, rhymed in couplets.

P. H. WICKSTEED.

OUR LADY'S TUMBLER.

IN the lives of the ancient fathers, where is store of goodly matter, is told a certain tale. Now I will not say that others full as fair may not be heard — ay! many a one — but I say that this is not to be so scorned but it is worth narrating. I will therefore tell you and relate of what befell a certain minstrel.

He wandered so far to and fro, over so many a plot and place, that he grew a-weary of the world and gave himself up to a Holy Order. Horses and robes and money, and whatsoever he had he straight surrendered to it, and clean dismissed himself from the world, resolved never again to set teeth in it. Wherefore he entered that Holy Order — as folk say — in Clairvaux. And when this dancer had given himself to it, albeit he was well adorned and beauteous, comely and well made, he knew no trade that he could ply therein. For all his life he had spent in tumbling and leaping and dancing. How to trip and spring he understood, but naught beside, for he had conned no other lesson — nor pater noster, nor chant, nor credo, nor

ave, nor aught that might make for his salvation.

When he had entered the Order, he saw those folk high-shorn converse by signs, while no sound passed their lips; and he supposed for sure that they could speak no otherwise. But presently he learned the truth, and knew that for penance they were forbidden to speak, therefore somewhiles they were silent; whereat it came into his mind that he too ought often to keep his silence; and he held his peace so meekly and so long, he had not spoken all the day had they not bidden him to do it; whereat there was no little laughter many a time. The man was all abashed amongst them, for he knew not to do or say aught with which they were busied there, and he was sore grieved and sad thereat. He beheld the monks and the converts, as each one served God here and there according to such office as he held. He saw the priests at the altars, for such was their duty, the deacons at the gospels, the sub-deacons at the vigils, while the acolytes stood ready for the epistles, in due time. One recites verses, and another a lesson, and the choristers are at the psalters,

and the converts at the misereres — for so they order their lamentings — and even the simplest at pater nosters. Through offices and cloisters he gazes everywhere, up and down, and sees in remote recesses here five, here three, here two, here one. He looks fixedly, if he may, at every one. The one has to lament, the other weep, a third to groan and sigh. Much he wonders what ails them. "Holy Mary!" he says, "what ails these folk that they bear them thus and show such grief? Methinks they are perturbed indeed, that they all make such lamentations." Then he added, "Holy Mary! — ah! woe is me, what have I said! I trow they are praying God for mercy. But, O wretched me! what am I doing? For there is none here so caitiff but who vies with all the rest in serving God after his trade; but I had no business here, for I know not what to do or say. A very wretch was I when I gave myself to the Order, for I know nor prayer, nor aught that is good. I see them — one before and another behind — while I only walk with nose in air and consume victuals for nothing. If I am found out in this I shall foully fall,

for they will thrust me out to the dogs. And here am I, a strong villain, doing naught but eat. Verily I am wretched in a high degree." Then in despite he wept for woe, and for his part would he were dead. "Holy Mary, mother!" he said, "do pray your Sovereign Father that he hold me in his pleasure, and send me his good counsel, that I may have power to serve him and you, and may earn the victuals that I take: for I know well that I misreceive them."

Thus maddened with grief he went his way, till, searching through the monastery, he came upon a crypt, and crouched down by an altar, pressing up as close to it as might be. Above the altar was the form of my lady, the Holy Mary. He had not lost his way when he came to that place! No, verily, for God, who well knows how to call his own to him, led him there. When he heard them sound for Mass he leapt up, all dismayed. "Ah!" he cried, "how am I betrayed! Now each one will say his stave, and here am I like a tethered ox, doing naught but browse, and spoiling victuals for no good. — Shall I say it? Shall I do it?

By the mother of God I will! I shall ne'er be blamed for it, if I do what I have learned, and serve the mother of God in her monastery according to my trade. The rest serve in chanting, and I will serve in tumbling."

He removes his cloak and strips himself, and lays his clothes beside the altar; but, that his flesh be not all naked, he keeps on an under-coat, right fine and thin, scarce more than a shift. Then he stood, just in his body, well girt and adorned. He girds his coat and takes his stand, turns towards the image right humbly, and looks upon it. "Lady," says he, "to your protection I commend my body and my soul. Sweet queen, sweet lady, despise not what I know: for I would fain essay to serve you in good faith, if God aid me, without guile. I can nor chant, nor read to you; but, certes, I would pick for you a choice of all my finest feats. Now, may I be like the bull-calf that leaps and bounds before his mother. Lady, who art no whit bitter to such as serve you truly, whatsoever I am, may it be for you." Then he began his leaps before her, low and small, great and high, first under and then over.

Then he threw himself on his knees again before the image, and saluted it. "Ah!" he says, "all-sweet Queen! of your pity and of your frankness, despise not my service." Then he tumbled and leapt, and made, in festal guise, the vault of Metz around his head. He saluted the image and adored it, and honoured it with all his might. Then he did the French vault and then the vault of Champagne, and then he did the Spanish vault and then the vaults they do in Brittany, and then the vault of Lorraine, and strained himself to do the best of all his power. Then he did the Roman vault, and put his hand before his brow and danced so featly, as he gazed right humbly at the image of the Mother of God. "Lady," he said, "this is a choice performance. I do it for no other but for you; so aid me God, I do not —for you and for your son! And this I dare avouch and boast, that for me it is no playwork. But I am serving you, and that pays me. The others serve, and so do I. Lady, despise not your slave, for I serve you for your disport. Lady, you are the *mon-joie* that kindles all the world." Then he tumbled with his feet up in the air, walked and

went on his two hands that he might journey closer to the ground. He twists with his feet and weeps with his eyes. "Lady," he says, "I adore you with heart and body, feet and hands, for I can nor more nor less. Henceforth I will ever be your minstrel. They shall sing in there together, and I will come here to entertain you. Lady, you can guide me. For God's sake do not despise me." Then he beat his breast in penitence, he sighed and wept right tenderly, for he knew not how else to pray. Then he turned back and made a leap. "Lady," he said, "so save me God, I ne'er did that before! This does not rank among inferior feats, and is all new. Lady! what fill of joyance should he have who might abide with you in your glorious manor. For God's sake, Lady, receive me therein, for I am yours, and no whit my own." Then he did the vault of Metz again, and tumbled and danced right there. And when he heard them raise the chants he laid too in right good earnest, and as long as the Mass lasted his body did not cease to dance and trip and leap, till he waxed so faint he might no longer stand upon his feet, but fell upon the ground and

dropped for very weariness. And as blood drips from the spit so the sweat started from him, head to foot, from end to end. "Lady," he said, "I can do no more now; but, indeed, I'll come again." With heat he seemed all burning. He puts on his vestments again, and when he is clothed salutes the image and goes his way. "Adieu," he says, "sweetest friend. For God's sake be not cast down, for if I can I will come again. At every hour[1] I would serve you the very best that may be, if it please you, and if I can." Then he went away, still looking at the image. "Lady," he said, "what pity that I know not all those psalters! Right gladly would I say them for love of you, most sweet Lady. To you I commend my body and my soul."

This life he led long time, for at every hour thenceforth he went to render his service and his homage before the image; for he took marvellous delight therein, and did it with a right good-will, so that no day was ever so weary but what he did his best

1 *I.e.*, the canonical hours of matins, nones, vespers and compline. So throughout the story.

therein to entertain the Mother of God; and never did he desire other sport. Now they knew, of course, that he went every day into the crypt, but no man on earth knew, save God, what it was that he did there, nor would he, for all the wealth the world possesses, have had any know his doings save only the Lord God alone. For he well believed that so soon as they should know they would chase him out and force him into the world again, which is all seething with sins, and he would liefer die than ever be bitten again by sin. But God, who knew his meaning, and how great was his compunction, and the love that made him do it, would not have his deed concealed. Rather did the Sire will and decree that the doings of his friend should be known and manifested, for his Mother's sake, whom he had fêted, and that all should know and understand and perceive that God rejects no one who comes to him in love, of whatsoever trade he be, if only he love God and do right.

Now, do you suppose that God would have prized his service had he not loved?

Not a whit, however much he tumbled! But it was his love that he prized. Do penance and toil all you may, keep fast and vigil all you may, weep all you may and sigh, groan and pray, and give yourself to discipline, and go to Mass and matin, and give all you have, and pay all you owe: yet, if you love not God with all your heart, all these good things are thrown away — be well assured — and avail you naught at all for salvation; for without love and without pity all labour counts for nothing. God asks not gold nor silver, but only true love in folks' hearts. And this man loved God unfeigningly, and that was why God prized his service.

So went it with the good man long space. I cannot number you the years that the good man was thus at ease; but the time came when he was very ill at ease: for a monk took note of him, and blamed him much in his heart for that he came not to matins. He wondered what became of him, and said that he would never stop till he knew what sort of man this was, and for what he was worth, and how he earned his

bread.[1] The monk observed and tracked and spied him out until he plainly saw him plying his trade without disguise, as I have told you. "In faith," said he, "here is fine sport! and methinks greater doings than all the rest of ours put together! There are the others at their orisons, and toiling for the houses, while he is dancing as proudly as if he had a hundred marks of silver. He does his business in good style, and verily he pays us all he owes. It is a goodly way of doing it — for us to chant for him and him to tumble for us! We pay for him and he for us. If we do weep, he gives us quits. Would all the Convent could see him as I do — if I had to fast till nightfall for it! Not a soul, I trow, could keep from laughing if they saw the fury with which this wretch goes killing himself, as he throws himself into his tumbling and gives himself no mercy. May God count it for penance! for he does it without guile. And, for my part, in sooth, I think no ill of it; for I take it he does according to his lights and in good

1 *I.e.*, what (spiritual) service he was rendering to the corporation in return for the bread he ate. So throughout.

faith, because he would not fain be idle." This the monk saw with his eyes at all the hours of the day, as he worked and rested not. Much did he laugh and much rejoice, and felt delight and pity.

He went to the Abbot and told him. From end to end he related it just as you have heard. Whereon the Abbot rose to his feet and said to the monk: "Now hold your peace, and do not scandalise him; I bid you, on the vows of your Order. And observe my command to speak of it to no one, save to me. And we will go and see it this day. We will find out what it may mean. And we will pray the Celestial King and his most sweet dear Mother, who is so precious and bright, to beg, in her sweetness, her Son, her Father, her Lord, to let me see this thing to-day, if it be his pleasure; that God be the more loved thereby and the good man be not blamed, if it likewise please him." Then they went all quietly and hid themselves without more adieu hard by the altar in a nook where he could not see them. The Abbot and the monk witnessed all the convert's office, and all the

divers vaults he made, and his leaping and dancing and saluting the image, and tripping and bounding, until he came to faint. He worked himself into such weariness that he needs must fall, and down he sat all worn out. The sweat all over him, for very toil, dropped down upon the floor of the crypt. But in short time, in little space, his sweet Lady succours him, her whom he serves without deceit. Well knew she how to come at need!

The Abbot looked and straightway saw a Dame so glorious descend from the vault that none e'er saw one so precious and so richly arrayed, nor was one so beauteous e'er born. Her garments were very costly with gold and precious stones. With her were the angels from heaven above, and the archangels, who came around the minstrel and solaced and sustained him. When they were ranged around him all his heart was assuaged. Then they pressed to serve him, because they longed to repay the service that he did their Lady, who is so precious a gem. And the sweet frank Queen held a white napkin, and fanned her minstrel with

it right sweetly before the altar. The Dame, frank and meek, fans his neck and body and face to cool him. Well does she undertake to aid him. The Dame abandons herself to the task. The good man does not turn a glance to her, for he sees her not, nor knows a whit that he has such fair company.

The holy angels do him great honour, albeit they remain no longer with him, and the Lady sojourns there no more. She makes the sign of God on him and turns away, and the holy angels make him an escort: for they find a marvellous delight in gazing on their companion, and only wait the hour when God shall cast him from this life and they shall have snatched his soul. And this the Abbot saw without let, and his monk, a good four times, for at every hour it came to pass that the Mother of God came to aid and succour her man, for she well knows to rescue her own. The Abbot had exceeding joy, for he had longed sore to know the truth of it. But now God had shewn him verily that the service pleased him which his poor man had rendered. The monk was all confused, as though

burnt with anguish. To the Abbot he said: "Have mercy, sire! This is a holy man that I see here. If I have said aught concerning him amiss 'tis meet my body make it good. Lay on me my penance, for beyond all doubt this is a good man. We have seen it all right through, and cannot ever be deceived about it." Said the Abbot: "You speak truth, God has made us know right well that he loves him with a love all tender. Now I command you straightway, in virtue of obedience, and on pain of falling under sentence, that you speak to no man of what you have seen, if it be not to God and to me." "And I," said he, "give you my promise, sire." With these words they withdraw, and make no longer stay in the crypt; nor did the good man delay, but put on his garments again, and when he had done all his task, he went to disport himself in the monastery.

And so the time came and went until a little afterwards it came to pass that the Abbot sent for the man that had so much good in him. When he heard that he was sent for and that the Abbot was asking for

him, his heart was so full of sorrow that he knew not what he should say. "Ah me!" he cried, "I am accused. Never shall I be a day without misery and toil and shame, for my service comes to naught. It is not pleasing to God, as I take it. Ah me! nay, rather, it displeases him: for the truth of it has come to light. Did I suppose that such a deed as mine and that such sport were fit to please the Lord God? Not a whit. They pleased him not at all. Ah me! I ne'er did any good. Alas, what shall I do, what shall I say? Fair, sweetest God, what will become of me? Now shall I be slain and shamed, now shall I be banished from hence, now shall I become a target out there in the world with all its evil. Sweet Lady, holy Mary, how far astray was that idea of mine! And I know not whom to take to counsel. Lady, come you to guide me. Nay, sweetest God, do but succour me! Do not delay nor linger. And do bring your Mother with you. For God's sake come not without her. Come both of you to help me, for I know not what to plead. They will say straightway, at the first word, 'Be off with you!' Oh me!

what answer can I make when I have not a word to say? What does it matter, for I shall have to go." Weeping, so that his face was wet, he came before the Abbot; weeping, he knelt before him. "Sire," he cried, "for the mercy of God, will you chase me out from here? Say what you command. I will do all your will." The Abbot said: "I will to know, and will that you should tell me true — you have been long time here, winter and summer — I will to know what is your worth, and how you earn your bread." "Alas!" said he, "I knew it well, that I should be sent upon my way soon as my doings should be known; that they would have no more to do with me. Sire," he said, "I go my way. Wretched I am and wretched I shall be, and I never made a farthing's worth of any goods." The Abbot answered: "Far am I from saying that, but I require and demand, and moreover I command you in virtue of obedience, that you tell me all you know, and at what trade you serve us in our monastery." "Sire!" he said, "how have you slain me! How this command kills me!" Then he tells him, with whatever grief, all his doings,

from end to end, so that he did not leave a word to say but told it all at a breath, just as I have related it. And now he has told it all and narrated it to him with clasped hands, weeping, kissing his feet and sighing.

The holy Abbot turned to him, and, weeping, raised him up, and kissed both his two eyes. "Brother," said he, "now hold thy peace, for I accord, in very truth, that you shall be of our convent. God grant that we may be of yours; in guerdon of service done in our own. I and you will be good friends. Fair, sweet brother, pray for me, and I will pray again for you. And I pray you, my sweet friend, and command you without feigning, that you do this service frankly, even as you have done it — ay, and yet better if you have the skill." "Sire," said he, "is this in verity?" "Yes," said the Abbot, "'tis in verity." He charged him, on pain of penance, to doubt it no more; whereat the good man was so overjoyed, as says the ditty, that he scarce knew what had become of him, and he must needs sit him down, and he turned all pale. When his heart came back to him his bosom leapt

with joy, so sore that an ill assailed him, whereof in right short space he died. But very meekly he did his service without repose, morning and evening, night and day, never missing an hour until he was smitten sick; and so great was the ill that held him that he could not stir from his bed. Then it was grievous shame to him that he might not pay his dues; and therefor chiefly was he troubled, for he complained not a whit of his ill, save that he stood in sore doubt of losing his penance, in that he toiled not at that toil that was his wont. It seemed him he was all too slothful; and since slothful he must be henceforth, the good man prayed to God to receive him e'er he were undone by sloth. For he felt such utter grief about this matter, whereof some knew, that his heart might not endure it; yet needs must he lie and could not stir. The holy Abbot honours him much; he and his monk at every hour come to chant at his couch. And he took such great delight in what they sang to him of God that he would not have had Poitou in lieu of it, but would have given all in quittance, such joy had he in hearing. Well did he confess and

repent; yet withal was he in doubt. What need of more? At the last it behoved him meet his end.

The Abbot was there and all his monks, many a priest and many a canon, who gazed at him right humbly, and saw all openly a miracle most marvellous. For they all saw with their eyes that at his end were the angels present, and the Mother of God and the archangels, ranged all around him. And on the other side were the furious ones, the enemies and the devils, to have his soul—it is no fable! But in vain had they waited, and hastened and strained so far, for they shall have no part in his soul. Albeit his soul departs from his body it falls not at all, for the Mother of God has received it. And the angels who are there sing for joy and go their way, and carry him to heaven, as was decreed. And this all the convent saw, and all the rest who were there. Now they all knew and were aware that God would no longer hide his love of his bachelor, but rather would that each and all should know and recognise the good in him. Great joy and great marvel had they thereat. High

honour did they render to his body, which they bore into their monastery, rendering high service to God. Nor was there one but chanted or read in the choir of the great church.

With right great honour do they bury him, and look upon him as a holy corse. And then without disguise the Abbot told them all the tale of him and of his way of life even as you have heard it, and of all that he saw in the crypt. The convent listened gladly. "Verily," they said, "we must needs believe it, and none should misbelieve you, for the truth bears witness. It is well proved at need; nor is there place for doubt that he has made his penance." Great joy had they amongst themselves thereat.

Thus ends The Minstrel. In happy hour he tumbled; in happy hour he served; for thereby he won high honour such that none may compare therewith. This is what the holy fathers relate concerning what befel this minstrel. Now pray we to God, who has no like, that he grant us so to serve him that we may earn his love.

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1 *With regard to the* text *of the first — Pisa — edition of* Adonais, *I think we may fairly accord to it the honour of being less corrupt than that of the original editions of any of Shelley's books. Its verbal inaccuracies are few and — comparatively speaking — of no importance. Nor is this surprising when we consider the care which, as we learn from his published letters, Shelley bestowed upon both its composition and its correction. There are, however,* three *important variations from the reading of the first edition of 1821 which are unhesitatingly accepted even by such jealous editors as Messrs. Rossetti and Forman, both of whom incorporate them in the text of their respective editions.*

In stanza viii the last line originally stood thus: —

" (and the law)
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"Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw."

In stanza xvi, line eight *originally ran thus:—*

"Amid the drooping comrades of their youth."

In Mrs. Shelley's revision we find:—

"Amid the faint companions of their youth."

Again in the quarto the last line of stanza xxviii is:—

"They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them as they go."

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"They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low."

THOMAS J. WISE.

FOR JANUARY:

THE 'ORFEO' OF POLIZIANO
TRANSLATED BY
JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

ADONAIS:
AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS.

Thou hast not lost all glory, Rome!
With thee have found their quiet home
Two whom we followers most admire
Of those that swell our sacred quire;
And many a lower'd voice repeats
Hush! Here lies Shelley! here lies Keats!

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

"THE *Adonais*, which takes its place in literature beside the laments of Moschus for Bion, and of Milton for Lycidas, belongs to that class of elegiac poems which does not aim at perpetuating the memory of the dead by a monumental portrait . . . but rather celebrates the dead through a celebration of grief and an impassioned meditation upon death. We do not know Keats more truly when we have read Shelley's poem, but our spirits are attuned to contemplate aright the untimely and sudden withdrawal, at whatever time or place, of bright things from earth — a withdrawal which we must lament, yet which is only apparent and not real. . . . Yet, though it contain no sculptured portrait of Keats, *Adonais* is the costliest monument in verse ever erected to the memory of an English singer. Before its close the poem rises into an impassioned hymn of immortality — the immortality of that spirit from which man arises, in which he lives and moves, and to the blessed life of which he returns at last."

EDWARD DOWDEN.

ADONAIS

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS, AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION ETC.

BY

PERCY. B. SHELLEY

Αστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ενι ζῶοισιν ἑῷος.
Νυν δε θανῶν, λαμπεις ἑσπερος εν φθίμενοις.
PLATO.

PISA

WITH THE TYPES OF DIDOT

MDCCCXXI.

PREFACE

Φάρμακον ἦλθε, Βίων, ποτι σον στομα, φάρμακον εἶδες·
Πῶς τευ τοῖς χείλεσσι ποτεδραμε, κοὐκ εγλυκανθη;
Τις δὲ βροτος τοσσοῦτον ἀνάμερος, ἢ κερασαι τοι,
Ἢ δοῦναι λαλέοντι το φάρμακον; ἔκφυγεν ὠδάν.

MOSCHUS, EPITAPH. BION.

IT is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem, a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled, prove, at least that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of Hyperion, as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats, died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the — of — 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins covered

in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses, was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where canker-worms abound, what wonder, if it's young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his Endymion, which appeared in the Quarterly Review, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgements from more candid critics, of the true greatness of his powers, were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said, that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one, like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates, is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled

calumniator. As to "Endymion"; was it a poem, whatever might be it's defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, "Paris," and "Woman", and a "Syrian Tale", and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men, who in their venal good nature, presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery, dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the Elegy was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of Endymion, was exasperated

by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed "every prospect to unwearied attendance "upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career — may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!

ADONAIS.

I.

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: with me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!

II.

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

III.

O, weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend; — oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of light.

v.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

vi.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast.

VII.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. — Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace,
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
Of mortal change, shall fill the grave which is her maw.

IX.

O, weep for Adonais! — The quick Dreams,
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not, —
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

X.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
"See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
"Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
"A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbed fire against his frozen cheek.

XII.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to its eclipse.

XIII.

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watchtower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the drooping comrades of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII.

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its steam immersed
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

XX.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?—th' intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

XXII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
"Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
"A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried: "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

XXIII.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbed tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV.

In the death chamber for a moment Death
Shamed by the presence of that living Might
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life 's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
"As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
"Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress

XXVI.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
"Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
"And in my heartless breast and burning brain
"That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
"With food of saddest memory kept alive,
"Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
"Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
"All that I am to be as thou now art!
"But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

XXVII.

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
"Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
"Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
"Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
"Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then
"Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
"Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
"Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
"The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
"The obscene ravens, clamorous oer the dead;
"The vultures to the conqueror's banner true
"Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
"And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
"When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
"The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
"And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
"They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them as they go.

XXIX.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
"He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
"Is gathered into death without a dawn,
"And the immortal stars awake again;
"So is it in the world of living men:
"A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
"Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
"It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
"Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI.

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

XXXII.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift —
A Love in desolation masked; — a Power
Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own;
As in the accents of an unknown land,
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "who art thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's — Oh! that it should be so!

XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one;
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh!
What deaf and, viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er flow:
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt — as now.

XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now. —
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms and unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings.— *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI.

He lives, he wakes — tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young Dawn
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on it's despair!

XLII.

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th'unwilling dross that checks it's flight
To it's own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in it's beauty and it's might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

XLIV.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from thier thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us", they cry,
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
"Swung blind in unascended majesty,
"Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.
"Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? oh come forth
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference: then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre
O, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead,
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

L.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have out grown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII.

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments. — Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV.

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

I. Adonais / an Elegy on the death of John Keats, / author of Endymion, Hyperion etc. / By / Percy. B. Shelley / *Greek quotation from Plato* / Pisa / with the types of Didot / / MDCCCXXI.

Small quarto; pp. i-v (of which pp. iii-v. form the preface); and pp. 7-25 of text.

It was issued in blue paper wrappers, with woodcut (a basket of flowers) and ornamental border. The exact size of uncut copies is 10¼ x 7½ inches, and the original price was 3s, 6d.

II. Adonais. / An Elegy / on the / Death of John Keats, / author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc. / By / Percy B. Shelley. / *Greek motto.* / Cambridge: / printed by W. Metcalfe, / and sold by Messrs. Gee and Bridges, Market-Hill. / MDCCCXXIX.

Octavo; pp. i-viii (of which pp. v-viii. form the preface); and pp. 1-28 of text.

The book was issued in paper wrappers (without either ornamentation or lettering), which in some copies are Blue and in others Green.

Uncut copies measure 8⅞ x 5⅝ inches.

III. THE SAME. Edited by H. Buxton Forman. Octavo, London, 1876.

A privately printed edition limited to 6 copies on vellum / 25 on Whatman's hand-made paper and 50 on ordinary paper.

IV. THE SAME. The Pisa edition of 1821. Reprinted in exact fac-simile, and edited with a Bibliographical introduction by Thomas J. Wise. Quarto; pp. 1 -24 1-26. London, 1886.

V. Adonais. Edited with introduction and notes by W. M. Rossetti. Crown 8vo. (Clarendon Press Series.) Oxford and London, 1891.

The above appear to be all the separate editions issued in English of *Adonais*.

HERE ends THE BIBELOT Volume Five. Printed by Smith & Sale for Thomas B. Mosher and published by him at XLV Exchange Street Portland, Maine. MDCCCXCIX.

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